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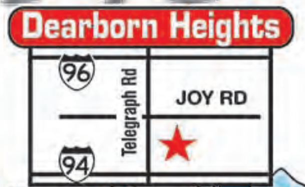
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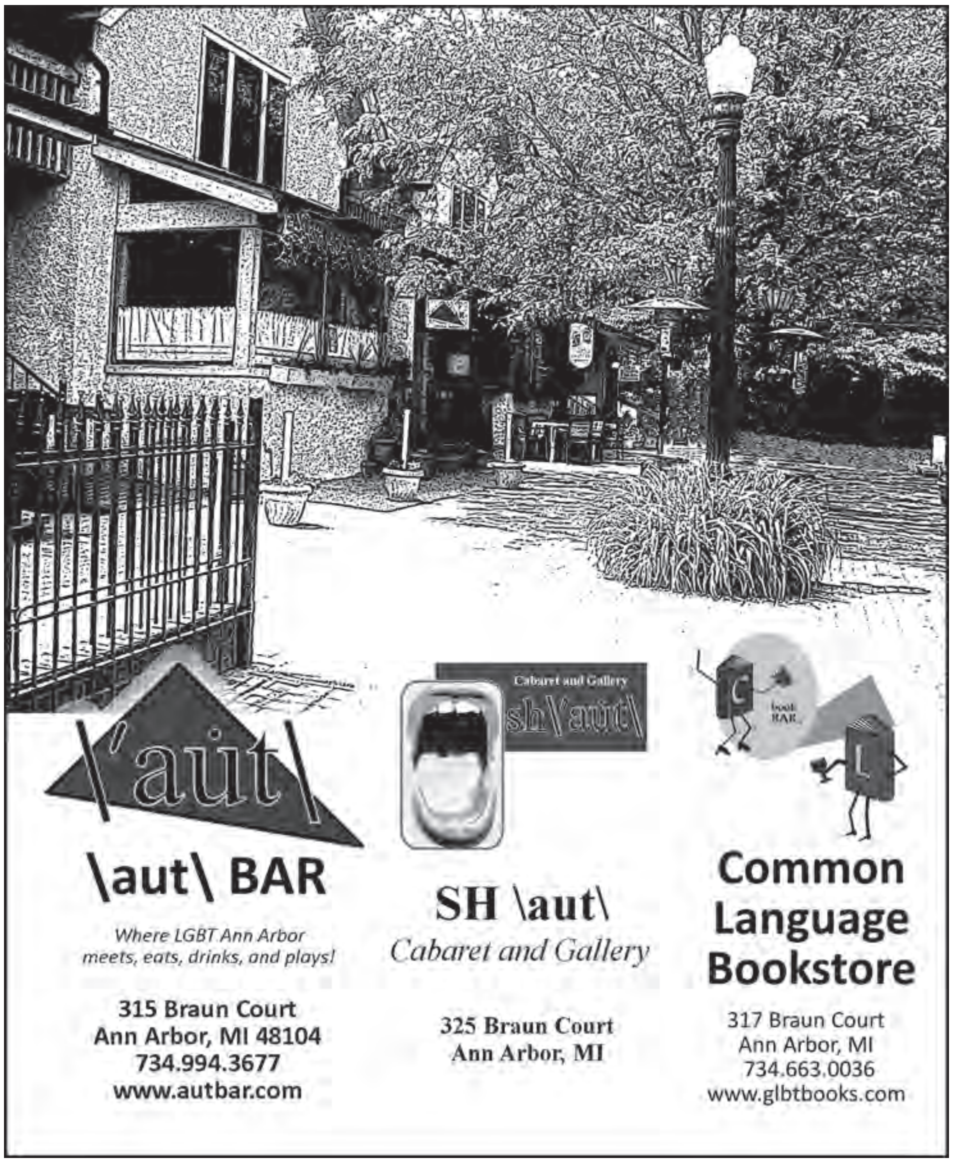

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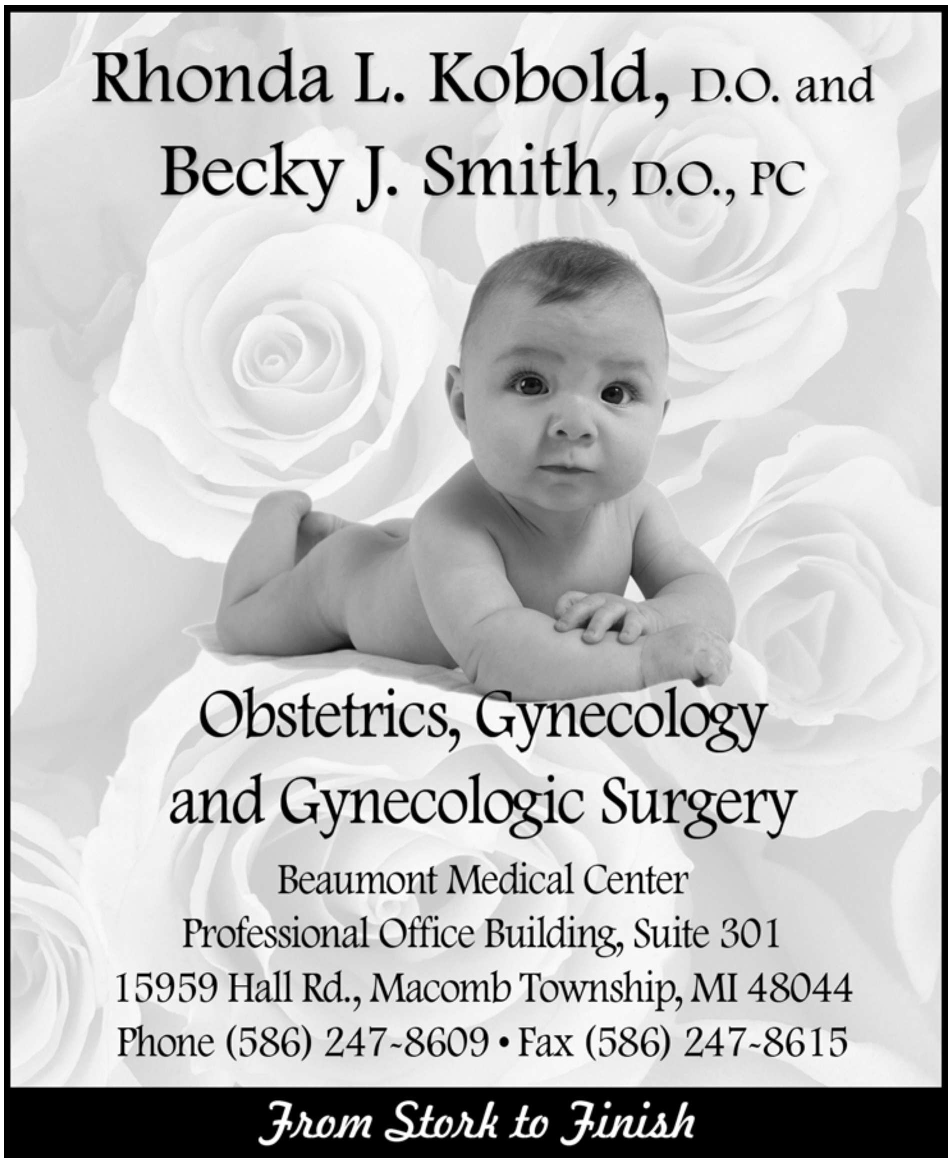

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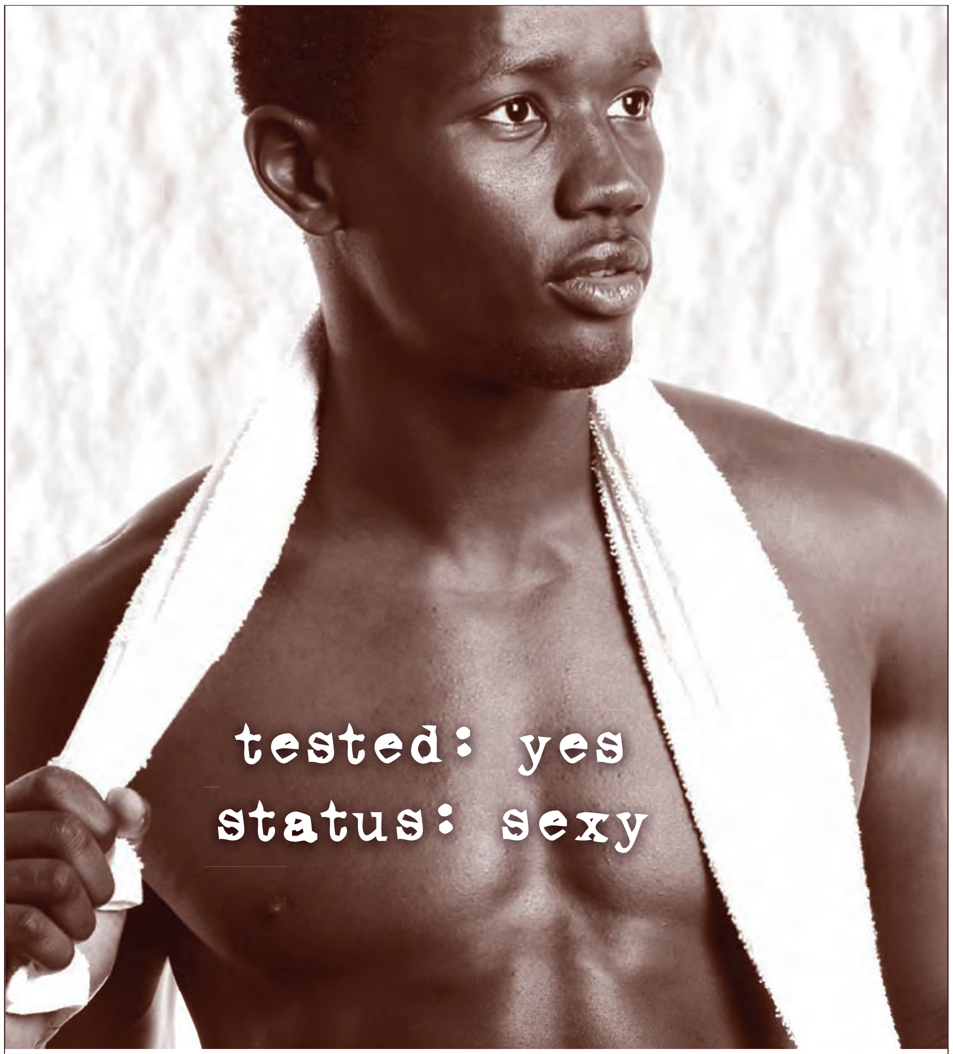

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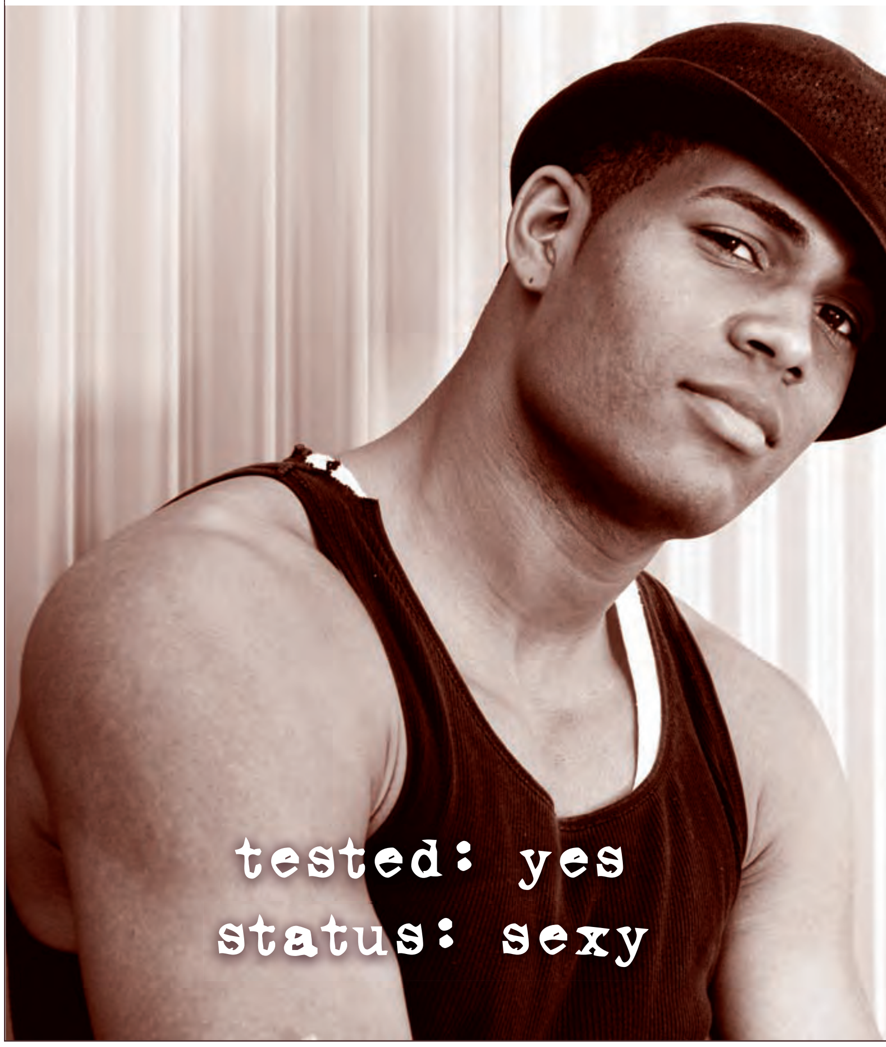

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Nothing average about it.

BY ERIC RADER

We need to help Obama evolve

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo was hailed as a hero by the large crowds at New York City's LGBT Pride parade on June 26, just 48 hours after his successful effort to pass a marriage equality law in the state. Beginning July 24, same-sex couples will no longer be denied a basic right that exists for straight couples everywhere – the right to legally marry the person they love. Gay people across the country euphorically celebrated New York's historic new law, even though it applies only in one state. New York's decision to grant equal marriage rights represents a major step forward in the long evolution of LGBT rights. Now it's up to leaders across the country to take up the cause and move the equal marriage movement to the 44 states that do not grant equal rights to gay and lesbian couples, including Michigan. As Gov. Cuomo said at the New York City Pride parade, "If New York can do it, it's OK for every other place to do it."

While many people have been involved in the struggle for equal marriage rights for LGBTs, it was Gov. Cuomo's persistence and political acumen that helped to seal the deal in New York. Two years ago, the New York Senate, then under Democratic control, voted down a gay marriage bill, despite the support of then-Gov. David Paterson, a Democrat. Gov. Cuomo learned from the mistakes made during the earlier fight for gay marriage, and aggressively lobbied key Republicans who had voted no in 2009 but were considered "persuadable" this time. Though most Republicans in both the New York Assembly (House) and in the Republican Senate voted against the equal marriage legislation, there were a few courageous GOP legislators who recognized that there was no rational reason they should oppose marriage equality, thus ensuring it would become law.

> President Obama now needs to go where his heart appears to be already, and endorse full and equal marriage rights for LGBTs.

Now that New York has extended equal marriage rights to gays and lesbians, much of the political focus shifts to President Obama and efforts to extend these rights nationwide. In his 1996 Illinois Senate race, Obama stated on a candidate questionnaire that he supported the right of lesbian and gay couples to legally marry. By the time he ran for president in 2008, Obama's public position had changed, and he indicated that while same-sex couples should have legal rights, civil marriage should be reserved for heterosexual couples. Obama's switch on marriage equality was obviously a political calculation at a time when a majority of Americans opposed gay marriage, though polls now show small majorities in support of marriage equality. The president has stated that his views on equal marriage rights are "evolving." Just one night before the New York Legislature passed the equal marriage bill, President Obama spoke at an LGBT political fundraiser in New York City, and applauded the efforts of New York to legalize gay marriage, while also stating his view that states had to determine this issue. At a press conference last week, the president celebrated New York's historic new law, but stopped short of endorsing full marriage equality. In all of his recent comments on this issue, it sounds as if the president is on the cusp of endorsing the right of same-sex couples to marry.

Many LGBTs are frustrated with President Obama for his continued reluctance to evolve further on equal marriage rights. Our community needs to work with the president and persuade him it's time to complete his evolution. We should thank the president for his efforts on our behalf, including his decision to end the legal defense of the "Defense of Marriage Act." As America's first African American president, President Obama is uniquely qualified and positioned to advance equal rights for all citizens. While presidents cannot change marriage laws in the states or act alone on federal legislation, they do possess a bully pulpit that allows them to speak out forcefully on behalf of the marginalized in our society.

President Obama's record on issues that affect our community is many times better than any of his recent predecessors. Other leaders in our history have evolved on issues of equality. Indeed, it was President Lyndon B. Johnson, a Texan and relative conservative on civil rights prior to his presidency, who actively lobbied for civil rights as president and signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. President Obama now needs to go where his heart appears to be already, and endorse full and equal marriage rights for LGBTs. Genuine legal equality for all LGBT Americans cannot be stopped, and it's up to our community to work with our leaders to make it happen. In the meantime, we all celebrate New York's great step forward on behalf of equal rights, and look forward to the day when all citizens everywhere are treated equally.

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Judge denies Shirvell request to seal deposition

Chris Armstrong is suing the former assistant attorney general for defamation

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

Last Wednesday a federal judge denied Andrew Shirvell's request to have his deposition sealed, reported the Detroit Free Press.

The Free Press quoted the judge's four-page ruling: "Defendant argues that the alleged abuse, threats, and harassment by third parties, not involved in this litigation, are a basis for the Court to issue a protective order. The Court finds no merit in Defendant's argument. Defendant's failure to identify 'specific facts' showing 'clearly defined and serious injury' that would result from the discovery sought prevents the Court from exercising its discretion in granting the relief requested."

Shirvell's request for a protective order was denied as well.

Sealing a deposition means that the deposition would not be made public record. Depositions are rarely sealed from public access, and almost never in their entirety. It is more common for limited parts of a deposition to be sealed, such as in the case of a company's trade secrets.

Shirvell is being sued by Chris Armstrong for stalking, harassment and defamation of character. Last fall, Shirvell wrote a blog about Armstrong called "Chris Armstrong Watch" and protested what Shirvell called Armstrong's "radical homosexual agenda." He also appeared on "Anderson Cooper 360" to defend his actions. Last year Armstrong was the first openly gay president of the University of Michigan Student Assembly; he graduated this spring.

Shirvell was eventually fired from his position after an investigation by the attorney general's office found that he used state computers to blog about Armstrong.

A Sept. 7, 2010 photo of University of Michigan alumnus and former assistant attorney general Andrew Shirvell speaking about the University of Michigan's student assembly president Chris Armstrong at a Michigan Student Assembly meeting. Shirvell was eventually fired from his job. AP Photo/The Michigan Daily, Marissa McClain.

> "Shirvell has had no problem publicly attacking Armstrong for all the world to hear and see, but now wants the truth or lack thereof behind his accusations to never see the light of day."
>
> –Deborah Gordon,
> Chris Armstrong's lawyer

Armstrong filed his suit against Shirvell on April 1, and on May 6 Shirvell asked that the suit be dismissed and he filed a countersuit. In his countersuit, Shirvell alleges that Armstrong is to blame for losing his job with the state of Michigan.

Armstrong's lawyer, Deborah Gordon, responded to the Shirvell's most recent request in a filing: "Defendant sets forth zero legitimate basis for his highly unusual request to seal his deposition in its entirety. If embarrassment of a deponent was a criteria, virtually every deposition taken would be sealed.

"(Shirvell's) brief actually makes it crystal clear that of all people *his* deposition should *not* be sealed. It is riddled with false statements, fabrications, dramatic hyperbole, accusations against others, paranoia and delusions of victimization. Mr. Shirvell contends that he has never bullied Chris Armstrong, but rather that he is being bullied ... Shirvell's brief also reveals that (he) continues to monitor and obsess over (Armstrong's) activities to this day.

"Shirvell has had no problem publicly attacking (Armstrong) for all the world to hear and see, but now wants the truth or lack thereof behind his accusations to never see the light of day ... It is telling and bizarre that (Shirvell) believes he will be embarrassed or harmed by his own statements made under oath."

Shirvell now lives in New York. The Michigan Bar Association is investigating whether or not Shirvell should be disbarred from practicing law.

Adoption agency seeks board members

ANN ARBOR– Hands Across The Water is looking for board candidates from the LGBT community who want to make a difference in childrens' lives. Knowledge of adoption and foster care is helpful.

If you can commit to attending quarterly meetings in Ann Arbor, are concerned about children who need families, and if you'd like to help strengthen HATW's commitment to the LGBT community, please call Kathi at 734-477-0135 or email hatw.nelson@att.net.

Find more news online:

- **Letter: Gay rodeo promotes animal abuse, not community**
- **National and International Briefs**

Family Week offers fun, games, togetherness

Children with gay and lesbian parents 'learn all families are alike'

BY JIM LARKIN

For one week every summer about 70 families with two moms or two dads gather on Lake Michigan's shoreline to frolic, make new friends, play games, march in a parade, strengthen family bonds and learn a valuable lesson.

"They see families like theirs and understand families are all alike," said Linda Campbell, president of Rainbow Families Great Lakes, which holds the annual Family Week in Douglas and Saugatuck. "By the end of the week, everyone is sad to go."

This year, Family Week begins July 9. Scheduled events include a Sunset Social at Oval Beach, a Kalamazoo River Family Adventure, an adults vs. kids scavenger hunt in downtown Douglas, a pancake breakfast, a family hike at Mt. Baldhead and Saugatuck Dunes, bowling night, beach time, music in the park, and the annual Family Week Celebration Parade in Douglas, which Campbell describes as a "teeny, tiny version of the Gay Pride Parade."

There also will be time set aside to enjoy some of the local family fun spots, such as Craig's Cruisers in Holland, Express Yourself Art Barn or the popular chain ferry along the Kalamazoo River.

> "By the end of the week, everyone is sad to go."
>
> –Linda Campbell, president of
> Rainbow Families Great Lakes

"We're developing a really strong program for the content and structure," said Becky Carten-Crandell, an organizing committee member who has been going to the event since the Family Pride Coalition 15 started it years ago. "I think it's important for kids to be in surroundings similar to their own."

But it's far from a gay-only event. Campbell points out that most the children are straight, and straight aunts, uncles and grandparents attend, as well as gay allies.

It's an event both Campbell and Carten-Crandell said their children look forward to every year, so they can renew friendships and start new ones. Both have two children.

"They really like it. They love to go to the beach and spend time in Douglas and Saugatuck and have a lot of friends that go," Campbell said.

Carten-Crandell added, "For us board members, we're volunteers, so we're very busy. The kids experience it on the level of a vacation."

About Family Week

- Family Week begins July 9. Go to www.rfgl.org to find a schedule of events and an online registration form.
- Registration is $275 per family or $80 a day.
- Many lodging alternatives are available in the Saugatuck area and nearby Holland; check out hotwire.com, priceline.com or www.rfgl.org.

Resource center founder dies from pneumonia

Tireless volunteerJames B. Knox co-founded two West Mich. resource centers

BY BENJAMIN JENKINS

KALAMAZOO– James B. Knox died of pneumonia on Monday, June 27. Knox was a co-founder of the Kalamazoo Gay and Lesbian Resource Center and also a co-founder of the Community AIDS Resource and Education Services. He was 64.

Knox's friends say his passion and work for the LGBT and AIDS awareness movements has been essential not only to CARES and the KGLRC, but to Michigan's LGBT community.

After studying theater at Purdue University, Knox moved to Kalamazoo and applied to work with the Barn Theatre in Augusta, Mich. in 1969. Initially Knox wanted to act, but Barn Theatre producer Brendan Ragotzy said Knox eventually started making props.

"He had a very keen eye," Ragotzy said. In 1970, Knox helped make the props for a Man of La Mancha performance, and those same props are being used in this summer's production of the show.

In 1985, Knox lost a close friend to HIV. Knox started talking with friends about ways to help people who were suffering with the disease. By 1986, Knox became a founder of CARES, which at the time was called Kalamazoo AIDS Resource and Education Services.

That year, openly gay Kalamazoo resident Harry Wayne Watson was bludgeoned to death with a sledgehammer by 17-year-old Terry Kerr. When prosecuted, Kerr used the "gay panic defense," claiming Watson made sexual advances. Kerr was found innocent of manslaughter.

Knox's friends say this is what caused him to form the KGLRC. "When Watson was murdered and no one was convicted, Jimmy found himself picketing the courthouse. Then, out of nowhere, somebody handed him a microphone," said Ron Kowalski, close friend and founding member of the KGLRC. "I always referred to him as the accidental activist."

In 1988, Knox, Kowalski and some volunteers created a helpline for gays and lesbians in Kalamazoo. Using Knox's home phone line, they forwarded callers to members of the newly formed KGLRC. Operators would talk with callers and refer them to doctors, psychologists and lawyers using a compiled gay and lesbian resource guide. "He did a lot financially to keep that helpline going. I don't think the resource center would exist today if it wasn't for what he started 23 years ago," said Kowalski.

On October 1, 1991, Knox's 37-year-old partner William Esman was found murdered in the Kleinstuck Preserve of Kalamazoo. The case was never solved.

Knox stayed heavily involved in CARES and the KGLRC. "At one time or another Jim has held every single office on that board," former KGLRC board president Tom Seiler said. "He's been involved with the center in one capacity or another throughout its entire history."

Knox was also the board president at CARES for 20 years. When many founding members had moved or "fallen off," said CARES Executive Director David Feaster, "He remained involved. He was one of the few who stayed around."

"Jim was not given to histrionics, or bombast. He was always there, he always was prepared with good advice and he never stepped back from the fight. And it was never about Jim; it was always about the cause. That's one thing that made him so incredibly valuable to us," Seiler said. "We're not going to see his like again. Because of his many years of service, he became our institutional memory. I have not yet put together what that loss is going to mean to us."

CARES, KGLRC and the Barn Theare are having a memorial service for Knox on Saturday, July 9 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Barn Theatre, located at 13351 M-96 in Augusta, Mich.

Photo of CARES and KGLRC co-founder James B. Knox provided by David Feaster.

> "He was always there, he always was prepared with good advice and he never stepped back from the fight. And it was never about Jim; it was always about the cause. That's one thing that made him so incredibly valuable to us. We're not going to see his like again."
>
> –Tom Seiler

Anti-bullying bill on hold in state legislature

Debate to continue when lawmakers return from two-month summer break

BY TARA CAVANAUGH

LANSING– The debate on two versions of an anti-bullying bill will continue after state lawmakers return from their two-month summer break.

Michigan is one of only six states without any anti-bullying legislation. There are two versions of an anti-bullying bill, also known as "Matt's Safe School Law," named for a teen who committed suicide after being bullied in school. One version of Matt's law lists specific classes that school districts must protect, including LGBT students. The other version does not list any specific classes.

Republican lawmakers have backed the general version of the bill. Democrats, the Michigan State Board of Education and Gov. Rick Snyder say they back the enumerated version that protects specific classes of students.

On June 29, Michigan's House Education Committee heard testimony on House Bill 4163, which is the general version of the law. Testimony given from advocates and high school students noted that committee members would strengthen the bill by requiring school districts to adopt policies that list protected categories and report incidents of bullying and harassment. The committee did not hear from all fifteen citizens who wanted to offer testimony.

"We are disappointed to have to oppose House Bill 4163 today but feel that changes can be made to strengthen it so it becomes the powerful tool it is intended to be," said Emily Dievendorf, policy director at Equality Michigan. We need to require school districts to adopt policies that list protected categories and report incidents of bullying and harassment."

> "Our kids need to be assured that their second home, their school, is conducive to learning and is accepting of who they are."
>
> –Emily Dievendorf, director of policy at Equality Michigan

"Our kids need to be assured that their second home, their school, is conducive to learning and is accepting of who they are."

In June, three dozen teens went to Lansing to encourage lawmakers to pass the enumerated version of the bill. The students are involved in Riot Youth, an LGBTQ program based out of Ann Arbor's Neutral Zone. They spoke with Democratic and Republican lawmakers and encouraged them to pass the bill that would protect all students.

Heard on Facebook

After the marriage equality victory in NY, the president is pressed by media on his same-sex marriage views, which he says are 'evolving.' What do you think?

I like the president to both declare my rights and be coy about them. So cute.
–**Kerri Covey**

Kerri, how is he being coy about our rights? Not one president has done more for our than our rights than he. Republicans and some Democrats tried to get him to back down on overturning "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," but he refused to! He has done much more to advance gay rights than any single president and he's said it again and again that we should have the same rights as our straight counterparts.

He's putting his money where his mouth is for us. Yes, we should keep up the pressure, but I don't understand how we expect him to do it all on his own and overnight! He's done more in 2 years than any president has done since Stonewall!
–**Ellyn IsfeelingThelove**

Honestly, I'm not impressed by "more than any other president." That's still pitifully little. He can't even make a strong statement in favor of gay marriage, which he supported during his first Illinois run but conveniently changed to support of civil unions when he began national campaigns. We're a core base for him and other Democrats. We deserve more than a request for money and a half-hearted "support."
–**Meghan Eagen-Torkko**

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NY marriage equality and backlash

Rick Santorum

"The reason the Left has gone after same-sex marriage is because it's a two-fer. When you redefine marriage, you cheapen marriage. You make it into something less valuable, less special ... it is a sure bet that will undermine faith."

–Rick Santorum, Republican presidential candidate, at a GOP dinner, responding to New York State's historic marriage equality bill, caucuses.desmoinesregister.com, June 27. As a campaign promise, Santorum has pledged to continue his fight against same-sex marriage.

Linda Harvey

"New York now has 'gay' marriage. This 'freedom' will include much more than a perpetual pansexual pagan party. It will, and already does, include libel, slander, intimidation, corruption of youth, revolt in congregations, suppression of parental rights, revision of language, disease, loss of employment and loss of life. Oh, and did I mention public sex, the porn explosion and public nudity? Welcome to entitlement sex."

–Linda Harvey, in her essay "Welcome to entitlement sex," about the legalization of same-sex marriage in New York, World Net Daily, www.wnd.com, June 27.

Clay Farris Naff

"History shows that every time some blowhard pounds the podium in defense of 'natural law,' he is in fact defending brute religious bigotry. 'Natural law' has been the cry against the abolition of slavery, the end of aristocracy, and equal rights for women. The reason for all the bluster should be made plain: old-time religion, be it Christianity, Judaism, or Islam, is authoritarian, and its authority derives from a simple claim: 'We have God's Word, and we'll tell you exactly how to obey it, or else.' To accept same-sex marriage is to reject that claim. It's not society that's undermined, but these ancient, authoritarian structures."

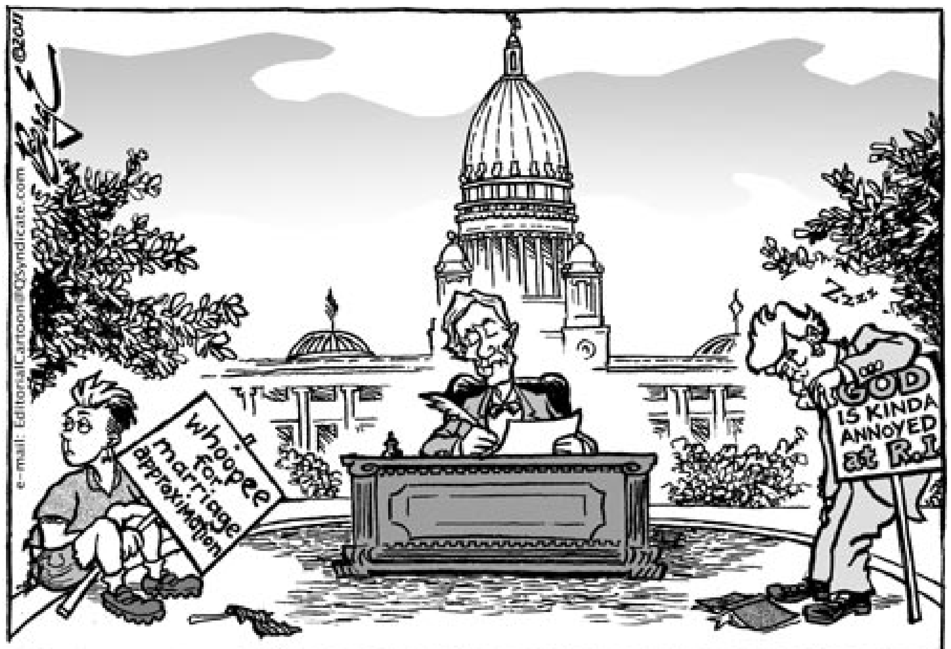
–Clay Farris Naff, in his column "New York's Gay Marriage Debate Exposes Moral and Intellectual Bankruptcy of Old-Time Religion," huffingtonpost.com, June 26.

Alex Pareene

"It's huge, though, isn't it? Gay marriage in the third-most populous state in the nation, passed by the elected legislature and not through the courts. And voted for by Republicans. Plural! Just a few years ago, all of that would've seemed absurd or impossible. ... The small-minded and the bigoted are losing, albeit slowly."

–Alex Pareene, in his column titled "The biggest victory for gay marriage yet," about the New York Senate's 33-29 vote to legalize gay marriage in the Empire State, salon.com, June 24.

Publishers: Jan Stevenson & Susan Horowitz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BREAKING NEWS! RHODE ISLAND APPROVES SAME-SEX CIVIL UNIONS!

BTL Editorial

Free speech vs. harassment

There's a fine line between free speech and harassment. A great example of this is the Chris Armstrong suit against Andrew Shirvell.

Armstrong, a recent University of Michigan graduate, was the first openly gay president of the student body last year. Shirvell, then the assistant attorney general of Michigan, created a blog about Armstrong. Shirvell wrote that the student had a homosexual activist agenda, showed up on campus to protest him, picketed outside of his home, and even spied on him during a party. Shirvell was eventually fired from his job – not for stalking or harassing a college student he'd never met, but for lying about his actions during an investigation. He also used state computers and phones for his stalking pursuits.

Armstrong filed suit against Shirvell this spring, asking for damages for defamation of character. Shirvell is now living in New York (which, funnily enough, just became a whole lot friendlier to gays) and is representing himself in the suit. It is interesting that Shirvell doesn't have anyone representing him; you'd think he'd have the support of one of the many anti-gay organizations out there. He continues to adamantly deny he has done anything wrong.

Shirvell did ask that his deposition be sealed from public view, which is a bizarre request. Depositions are almost never sealed in their entirety, because the public is supposed to have access to the details of the legal services its taxes pay for.

What is so unsettling about this case is that it proves just how agreeable our state climate is to those who dislike gays. Our state still doesn't have any protections for LGBTs in housing or employment. Our state doesn't allow same-sex marriage. And a strange, unofficial but widely practiced ban on second-parent adoption means that same-sex couples are also denied the ability to create families that are recognized by the state.

Our state also doesn't have any anti-bullying law, even though it's crystal clear that bullying is a problem, especially for LGBT students. Many people are trying to sway the state legislature to pass a version of an anti-bullying law that would offer protections to classes of students, including the LGBT students. The legislature put any serious debate about the bill off until it returns from its two-month break, so that's a battle that advocates will continue to wage when students return to school this fall.

> Bullying – also known as stalking and harassment – obviously lasts well into adulthood. A little bit of education and support in students' formative years could help bullies like Shirvell from spinning out of control.

State Republican lawmakers insist that it wouldn't be right to offer certain students special protections, that those special protections create an unnecessary burden on schools and lawmakers.

We say that bullying – also known as stalking and harassment – obviously lasts well into adulthood. The Armstrong v. Shirvell case is just one well-publicized example. A little bit of education and support in students' formative years could help bullies like Shirvell from spinning out of control. Why wouldn't our state attempt to provide that?

BTL Viewpoint

BY NUSRAT VENTIMIGLIA

Michigan needs a stronger hate crimes law to combat violent crimes

Last month, the Michigan Court of Appeals rejected one man's so-called "gay panic" defense. In Michigan v. Cutler the court agreed that a criminal defendant was not entitled to present his self-defense argument to the jury. Though the victim's story clearly shows Dale Cutler selected him because he is gay, Cutler was not charged with a hate crime. The reason: Michigan's hate crime law, known as the Ethnic Intimidation Act, does not recognize such crimes against gay and transgender people. The gay and transgender inclusive federal hate crimes law, the Shepard-Byrd amendment, was four months away from being signed into law. Thankfully the story is not entirely tragic – the victim survived, and his assailant was convicted despite attempts at presenting the "gay panic" defense.

When a judge or jury is presented with a claim of self-defense, the accused's conduct is compared with that of a fictional character – "the reasonable man." The reasonable man may defend himself against a threat of imminent death or serious bodily harm using the amount of force necessary to protect himself against that threat. Cutler is a trained cage fighter described as being a "good size guy," compared with the victim, who had a "thin build" at 130-140 pounds. According to the victim, Cutler delivered at least 30 blows to the head, leaving the victim in and out of consciousness in the hospital for days after the assault. In this case, it was the amount of force used that put Cutler's admitted actions into the realm of condemnable acts and a jury convicted him after 23 minutes of deliberation. Reason, in this case, prevailed. The "gay panic" defense, though, has prevailed in other cases, as in Steven Scarborough's voluntary manslaughter conviction for killing Victor Manious (who was beaten to death with a baseball bat).

> Michigan needs a comprehensive hate crimes law that includes protections for gay and transgender people and demonstrates that hate violence is not acceptable in our communities.

Ironically, some cases in which a "gay panic" defense is used are in fact classic examples of hate crimes and the defense is an extension of that hate – grounded in a hope that latent anti-gay biases will replace reason as the jury's basis for a verdict. In such cases, a victim is selected because of his or her perceived identity as gay or transgender then subjected to brutal violence, characterized by "overkill" (multiple stabbings, blows or mutilation). In such cases, the presentation of a "gay panic" defense is utterly repugnant. This was true in the trial for Angie Zapata's murder (beaten to death with fists and a fire extinguisher) and in the trial for Matthew Shepard's murder (beaten while tied to a fence post and left for dead). Zapata's case was the first transgender murder tried as a hate crime and Shepard's case re-energized calls for an inclusive federal hate crime law.

Hate crimes legislation at the state level would accomplish much in such cases. It would ensure a fair judicial process in which such biases do not exonerate wrongdoers, but are seen as an implicating part of the violent crimes they motivated. It is the act, coupled with hateful intent, which should be criminal. Michigan v. Cutler represents a step forward in eliminating bias from the courtroom, but also exposes a gaping void in our state's law. This is a shortcoming that fails to hold violent criminals accountable to their victims and their victim's survivors. Hate-motivated crimes against those who are or are perceived to be gay or transgender are not recognized and punished as are other hate-motivated crimes. Michigan needs a comprehensive hate crimes law that includes protections for gay and transgender people and demonstrates that hate violence is not acceptable in our communities.

Nusrat Ventimiglia serves as the Director of Victim Services at Equality Michigan. Learn more about the organization at www.equalitymichigan.org.

BTL Parting Glances
Then and Now

BY CHARLES ALEXANDER

Podophilia, anyone?

The human foot, with its 26 bones, 33 joints, is an architectural marvel of evolutionary development. Its complex structure contains more than 100 tendons, ligaments, muscles. But you knew all that.

The foot is also the focus of much sizable erotic pleasure. (That is, if you're trim enough to bend over and touch your toes or those of your bed partner du jour.)

Statistics show that 1.14 percent of the global population, roughly 68 million people, are "into feet." (And, it goes without saying: a greater number – notably, most gay men – are, for whatever reason of Olympic measurement, also "into inches.")

In 2007, researchers at the University of Bologna came up with that data in a study of 5000 responders – presumably all hot blooded Italians – finding the most popular body parts when it comes to sex to be feet and toes, with 47 percent surveyed preferring this taste-worthy combo.

Two evolutionary psychologists at the University of Albany, Jeremy Atkinson and Michelle Rowe – perhaps intent upon wasting research grants on findings of little, if any, lasting importance and significance – find that women with little feet tend to be more attractive to men. Heterosexual men, that is.

My source for this podophilia ("love of feet") data is soon-to-be-released, "The Book of Kink: Sex Beyond the Missionary," by Eva Christina, an NBC-TV writer, film maker, editor of Notorious magazine. (Perigee Press, $14)

Observes Ms. Christina, "There are foot parties worldwide, with high attendance rate." (PG readers please note: I have personally been invited to none. My bunions have limited marketability, I'll admit. However, my passport is just recently renewed.)

"Partygoers mill around models high up on the platform with bare feet. Photographs adorn the walls of all types of feet. And the entire night is focussed on worshiping the foot. Doug Gaines and Gary Brett started foot fetish parties, one for straight people (the Foot Fetishists and Fantasies Society), one for gay people (the Foot Fraternity)."

I haven't a clue who Gaines and Brett are, but I would assume that their intentions are honorable, aimed at non-controversial, leave-your-shoes-and-socks-at-the-door, safe sex, this-little-piggy-went-to-market, etc., digital manipulation.

Ms. Christina also reports that things occasionally get out of hand in what is, at bottom line, an often foot-in-mouth business proposition with attendant clubfoot risks. "The Foot Worship Palace in New York City was popular until it was closed down in 2009.

"According to owner, 'Jason,' in an email sent to customers, the reason was because police came and filed charges such as prostitution against him, which he claimed were untrue." (My imagined headline: Toes Get Foot 'Palace' in Jam.)

Among famous devotees of feet adoration, a thoughtful comment or two merits reflection. Actress Brooke Burke shrimps, "I love to see a man's bare foot, but it's got to be taken care of. If they're not well manicured, you've got to wonder what the rest of him is like. I don't want to get in bed with somebody and feel his gnarly feet."

This nail-polished gem from Jack Black, reported in Playboy, "They have to be clean. I'm not into, like, funky odors, but I do have a bit of a foot fetish, yes. I find myself staring at feet. I like a heel. If she's wearing clogs, that does something for me. Flip-flops. Sandals. Bare feet are the best."

And, what about shoes? "Plenty of movies, TV shows – 'There's Something About Mary,' 'Sex and the City' – have entertained us about shoe fetishes." Two terms can add subliminal allure to cocktail conversation: "shoe retifism" (or fetish) and "altocalciphilia" (love of high heels).

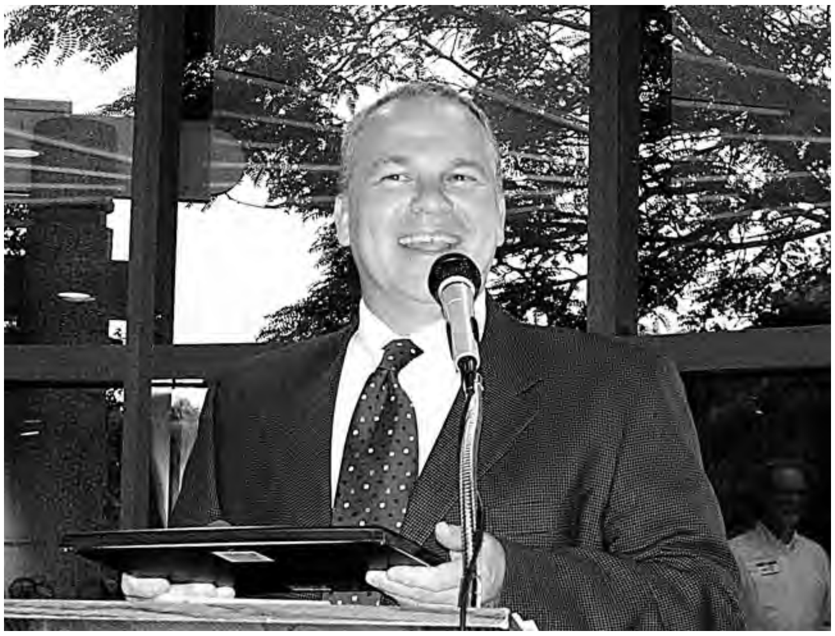
One final Madonna lace-up is not remiss in this odoriferous discussion when tripping life's light fantasy fantastic, "Shoes are better than sex because they last longer." Anyone into 'gnarly'?

Charles@pridesource.com Have a rainbow day!

Saginaw Pride Awards celebrate community action

Tri-City leaders, activists honored at third annual ceremony

BY TANA MICHAELS



Bill Giorgis was given a Pride Award for his volunteer work at the Saginaw Pride Awards ceremony on June 28. Giorgis has donated generously to the LGBT community. BTL photo: Tana Michaels.

SAGINAW– Outstanding members of the Tri-City's LGBT community were honored at the Perceptions-sponsored third annual Saginaw Valley LGBT Pride Awards Banquet held June 28 at Saginaw's Andersen Enrichment Center. Perceptions Saginaw Valley is a non-profit, Tri-City LGBT organization.

The awards ceremony, which was held to commemorate the 42nd anniversary of Stonewall and to honor local members of the Tri-City area, was emceed by Dr. Charissa Urbano. She reminded the audience that even though "inequality erodes dignity," the awards banquet provides an opportunity for healing and belonging.

The night's keynote speaker was BTL publisher Jan Stevenson, who laid out a plan about what the community could do to make change in Michigan. She urged the audience to organize politically, have responsible leadership and apply meaningful pressure on both allies and enemies.

Four Pride Awards were presented. Pride Awards are given to individuals who show outstanding leadership and commitment through their advocacy of acceptance, equality and respect for all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

The first Pride Award was presented to Bob and Denise Malosh from Midland for their leadership roles in PFLAG. Mr. Malosh was president and his wife was secretary for many years. They have helped countless other families learn to accept their child's sexual orientation. They've also lobbied in Lansing. Although they've given up their official positions at PFLAG, they haven't stopped being leaders and role models in the community. The Maloshes thanked the group for giving them "hope that their son could find a place in the world where he could be comfortable."

Rev. Kathy VanBuskirk from Saginaw was honored with a Pride Award for her work in counseling, especially for people in the LGBT community, and for being the founder and director of the first Tri-City LGBT Pride Festival held in Saginaw on June 25 at Ojibway Island. More than 2,000 people attended the festival.

The third Pride Award was earned by Randy Hasso, also from Saginaw, for his volunteer service. Hasso has been generous with his time, talent and resources at the local, regional, state and national levels. He has been an officer or board member of Dignity Tri-Cities, The NAMES Project, Wellness Network Tri-Cities and Perceptions Saginaw Valley, putting in many hours behind the scenes for the success of dozens of projects. "It's nice to be able to be with a group like this and experience friendship," Hasso said.

Bill Giorgis from Saginaw was given a Pride Award for his volunteer work in the community. The owner of Mike's Wrecker Service in Saginaw and an active member of several community groups, he has donated generously to the LGBT community. Giorgis said he was brought up in a giving family that goes by the adage, "give until it feels good. Being able to help is incredibly important."

The Lifetime Achievement Award was given posthumously to John Monahan for being the first openly gay community activist and organizer in the Tri-City area. Monahan, who died in 2002, was involved with local groups and he lobbied elected officials in Lansing. He was co-founder of the Triangle Foundation, serving as president, and was involved in other LGBT groups.

The Business Award was accepted by Steven Magstadt on behalf of the owners of the Magic Bean Café in Saginaw: Lisa Rechsteiner, Eugene Seals, and Stephanie Zeilinger. The Magic Bean Café received the award for being a welcoming venue for LGBT meetings as well as for contributing time, money and resources to the LGBT community. Magstadt echoed Stevenson, saying, "I think it's OK that we get organized. Maybe we do need to get a little pissed off, impatient, get moving and get organized together."

Michigan AIDS Coalition celebrates funding

FERNDALE– The Michigan AIDS Coalition is excited to receive more than $244,000 in funding from grants. The donors include Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foudnation, The Hope Fund and others.

MAC Chief Executive Officer Helen Hicks is thrilled with the strong support the Coalition is receiving from the foundation community. "The agency has been very reliant upon the state of Michigan to sustain its mission and has begun to seek new support while the state grapples with shortages. The foundations have always been there for the two previous non-profits that birthed MAC, and now they are here for us. We are deeply grateful and will use the gifts to sustain this much needed mission."

Photo spotlight: Tri-City Pride

The first Tri-City Pride was held on Saturday, June 18 from 1-7 p.m. on Ojibway Island in Saginaw, and photographer Kari Melissa Helm captured these moments for BTL. To see more photos of the well-attended event under a gorgeous summer sky, go online to www.pridesource.com.

Reporters press Obama on gay marriage views

President says 'not going to make news on marriage equality' any time soon

BY LISA KEEN

President Obama at a mid-day nationally televised press conference on Wednesday, June 29 was repeatedly pressed for his views on marriage equality. He spoke out strongly against discrimination based on sexual orientation and detailed many of the things his administration has done to advance equal rights for LBGT people. But he continued to dodge questions about his personal view of same-sex marriage.

Political commentators had been speculating that a question about marriage equality would be asked, given President Obama's high-profile speech in New York on the eve of that marriage equality vote. And, for the first time in the history of presidential press conferences, a gay-specific question came up at the beginning of the event. The second reporter who was called on, MSNBC's White House reporter Chuck Todd, asked the president to comment on the constitutionality of three things – the War Powers Act, the debt limit, and "do you believe marriage is a civil right."

In response, the president laughed and noted that Todd had asked a "hodge podge" of a question.

"We're going to assign you to the Supreme Court," quipped the president. "I'm not a Supreme Court justice, so I'm not going to put on my constitutional law professor hat here." He then said he wanted to talk about Libya and did so, concluding that he didn't think the constitutionality of the War Powers Act was really at issue. He then asked Todd to repeat the other parts of his question and Todd asked about marriage.

The president was clearly prepared.

"This administration under my direction has consistently said we cannot discriminate as a country against people based on sexual orientation," said President Obama. He said his administration has done more to advance equal rights for LGBT people in two-and-a-half years than the previous 43 presidents, and he rattled off an impressive list of accomplishments – from a new hate crimes law to a law repealing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," from hospital visitation to refusing to defend "the federal government poking its nose" into state laws defining marriage. He also said the administration "filed briefs before the Supreme Court that say we think any discrimination against gay, lesbian, and transgender people is subject to heightened scrutiny."

That latter reference was apparently to a letter the administration sent to Congress, not the Supreme Court, notifying it that the president and attorney general had concluded the Defense of Marriage Act is unconstitutional and that laws infringing upon the rights of LGBT people, like DOMA, should be given the highest level of scrutiny by the courts.

"We've made sure that is a central principle of this administration," said Obama.

Although Todd did not ask about New York specifically, President Obama spoke about New York's marriage law, essentially repeating comments made at a fundraiser. He said the state of New York "made a decision to recognize civil marriage, and I think it is important for us to work through these issues." Each community and each state, he said, will be different.

"What you're seeing is a profound recognition that gay, lesbian and transgender persons are our brothers and sisters, our children, our friends and co-workers, and they've got to be treated like every other American, and I think that principle will win out," said President Obama. He said he doesn't think progress in this area will be "perfectly smooth" but that he has learned "a president can't dictate precisely how this process moves."

"But we're moving in the direction of greater equality," said Obama, "and I think that's a good thing."

Laura Meckler of the Wall Street Journal pressed a second question on marriage equality, asking President Obama, "Do you personally now support same-sex marriage?"

"I'm not going to make news on that today," said Obama, using a line he has engaged in previous interviews when asked about marriage equality. He then answered another question of Meckler's on a different topic.

Meckler then pressed again, asking about his personal views on same-sex marriage.

"I think this has been asked and answered," said Obama, "and I'll keep on giving you the same answer until I give you a different one, and that won't be today."

> Obama hedged several questions from reporters directly asking him about his views on marriage equality at a nationally televised press conference.

BTL Creep of the Week

Vicky Hartzler

BY D'ANNE WITKOWSKI

Vicky Hartzler

Gays are a bunch of crybabies. Yeah, I said it. And you know what that took? Courage.

And you know who knows about courage? Rep. Vicky Hartzler, R-MO, that's who.

No, she didn't come right out and say that gays were crybabies, but she clearly thinks they need to quit whining and get over themselves.

On June 29, gay-rights advocates at a public forum who filmed the encounter confronted Hartzler.

"First of all, are you guys with the Democrats or the Republicans?" Hartzler asked them. "I just wondered, are you friendly or are you not?" Of course, when a politician asks if you're "friendly," she's really asking you, "Are you going to kiss my ass or challenge me?"

The activists asked Hartzler about comments she'd made during a recent address to the Eagle Forum Collegians 2011 Summit, a get-together of young conservatives. During the address she'd made a slippery slope argument, likening two consenting adults of the same sex marrying each other to polygamy and incest, and the said that gays didn't deserve marriage equality any more than a three-year-old had the right to drive a car.

During the Summit address she said, "Pretty soon, if you don't set parameters, you don't have any parameters at all, the (marriage) license means nothing — the marriage means nothing. It's their right to marry whoever they want, but we're saying marriage is between a man and a woman. So, there's a difference there. But it's not a right in the Constitution as far as that goes either. It's not a right of anybody — of a 3-year-old to be able to drive a car. You know, the government has set some parameters that they think is correct."

She's right, of course, that three-year olds don't have a right to drive. Unless, of course, that three-year old has successfully obtained his or her hardship license.

But I digress. Hartzler replied to the activist asking her about the aforementioned statement, "No, no, no. You misunderstood. That was a misunderstanding of the quote," then added, "that was really taken out of context."

It's hard to imagine how such comments can be misconstrued or taken out of context. Especially because it's not like Hartzler hasn't already made herself into one of the most outspoken foes of gay rights.

Hartzler was a big player in the 2004 anti-gay marriage ban enshrined in the Missouri constitution. When asked about the amendment she replied sarcastically, "I can't believe you asked me that. I'm so surprised. I'm so, so surprised."

An activist asked, "How do you think that makes young people like me feel about ourselves, to come up in a society that to us feels like doesn't value us in the same way straight people are valued?"

Needless to say, Hartzler didn't exactly answer the question. "We're not the ones changing the policy. OK, so you shouldn't feel bad at all," she said.

"Why shouldn't I feel bad if there's an amendment, if you champion an amendment prohibiting me from (marrying)?" he asked.

"Right now it has been the law of the land for a long time. Marriage is between a man and a woman. All we did in 2004 is just put that in the constitution. So we're not changing policy at all. And, anyway, so you shouldn't feel bad," she replied.

See? Quit crying, crybaby gays. You shouldn't feel bad (read: cry) over some silly little amendment to the constitution that enshrines your second-class status. It was already illegal for gays to marry each other. Gosh.

Hartzler clearly gets it. Not only does she think gays are immoral and that gay rights are hogwash, but she understands that amending the constitution, even a state constitution, is no big deal. So quit yer cryin'.

Deportation of citizen's same-sex partner canceled

Will the Obama administration halt similar deportations?

BY SAMANTHA HENRY

NEWARK, N.J. (AP)– Immigration officials called off the deportation of a Venezuelan man who legally married his same-sex partner in the U.S., a move advocates hope will push the Obama administration to halt similar deportations and help repeal a federal law that recognizes only marriages between a man and a woman.

Henry Velandia, a 27-year-old professional salsa dancer from Caracas, asked to remain in the U.S. as the spouse of U.S. citizen Josh Vandiver, a 30-year-old graduate student at Princeton University. They were legally wed in Connecticut but live in New Jersey, where same-sex marriage is not legal.

Because of the Defense of Marriage Act, a 1996 federal law that defines marriage as between a man and a woman, Vandiver was not able to sponsor Velandia for a green card, as a heterosexual person could sponsor a spouse.

Velandia's visitor visa expired, and he was placed in deportation proceedings. The couple's attorney, Lavi Soloway, the founder of a group aimed at stopping the deportation of gay and lesbian spouses of Americans, filed to have the order canceled.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials in New Jersey notified the couple Wednesday that they were ending deportation proceedings against Velandia.

"It's an amazing relief to go from one day having your spouse being deported, to the next day looking forward to a life together as a married couple; building it, and planning it, just like any other married couple," Vandiver said.

The case has drawn attention to the complexities faced by many of the estimated 36,000 gay and lesbian couples of mixed nationality in the U.S.

Soloway said that although the decision in Velandia's case did not set a legal precedent, it was the first involving the spouse of a lesbian or gay American in which the Department of Homeland Security showed it has the discretion to evaluate the merits of each case and, when applicable, decline to pursue deportation.

"The administration clearly believes it is discriminatory and unconstitutional to have a law that denies recognition to lawful marriages of gay and lesbian citizens," Soloway said. "By extension, it's unthinkable this administration would take the position that the spouse of a gay and lesbian American should be treated any differently than the spouse of a straight American citizen."

Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials in New Jersey did not return calls by press time.

President Barack Obama reiterated at a news conference on June 29 that he had instructed the Justice Department to stop defending the marriage act in court. He said he supported gay equality but repeated his position in support of civil unions instead of marriage, saying the definition of marriage was best left to states.

Obama's instruction to stop defending the marriage act factored into Velandia's deportation case. In May, his case was adjourned by a Newark immigration judge, who said clarification was needed from U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder after he intervened in a similar case.

Holder had set aside a Board of Immigration Appeals ruling allowing the deportation to Ireland of Paul Wilson, a gay man illegally in the U.S. who entered a civil union in New Jersey with his male partner. In that case, the board had based its decision to deport on the Defense of Marriage Act.

Holder asked the judges to determine whether Dorman could be considered a spouse under New Jersey law, and whether he would be a spouse under immigration law were it not for the Act, according to a copy of the decision. The board's decision is pending.

Supporters of the Defense of Marriage Act say that the administration's actions send a confusing message, and that the debate over the law should not be conducted through executive branch nullification, but through regular channels. Some members of Congress want to repeal the law, and many advocates expect a federal court to invalidate it, although the process could take years.

U.S. Rep. Rush Holt, who represents the central New Jersey district where Vandiver and Velandia live, wrote a letter in April asking the Obama administration to halt deportation proceedings against the same-sex spouses of U.S. citizens in light of Holder's actions.

Velandia told The Associated Press that although he was elated his deportation had been halted, he remains in legal limbo because he cannot be sponsored for a green card by his spouse.

"It's basically given me my life back, being able to be with my husband after feeling so much tension over waiting to see what was going to happen with me," Velandia said. "I'm just so happy they've given me the opportunity to stay with the person that I love."

'Ticked-Off Trannies' comes to Showtime

BY REX WOCKNER

The "tranny" movie that the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation tried to get banned from New York's Tribeca Film Festival airs on Showtime throughout July.

The network says of the film, Ticked-Off Trannies with Knives, "A group of vengeful 'trannies' learn martial arts and seek bone-crushing revenge on the dim-witted thugs that assaulted one of their own in this violent, gleefully trashy homage to 1970s exploitation flicks."

GLAAD campaigned against the movie in early 2010, demanding that it "be pulled" from Tribeca's lineup.

"The film, its title and its marketing misrepresent the lives of transgender women and use grotesque, exploitative depictions of violence against transgender women in ways that make light of the horrific brutality they all too often face," the organization said.

"GLAAD has reached out to writer/director Israel Luna, the film's producer and the Tribeca Film Festival, and both have refused to take responsibility for the problematic content and offensive marketing of this film. We urge you to contact the Tribeca Film Festival and call on them to pull Ticked-Off Trannies with Knives from their schedule."

Tribeca refused to disinvite the film, and Luna, who is gay, fought back with a vicious YouTube parody of GLAAD.

Village Voice columnist Michael Musto called the movie's characters "funny, tart-tongued, and caring ... breasty and well-accessorized."

"I adored them," he said.

> "The film, its title and its marketing misrepresent the lives of transgender women and use grotesque, exploitative depictions of violence against transgender women."
>
> –GLAAD

The (Gay) Gaga Interview

Superstar talks activism, her legacy and how being a gay icon is a 'tall order'

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Lady Gaga is one of the biggest superstars in the world. But speaking to her only briefly during this rare interview, she evades her larger-than-life image with affable charm, self-deprecating humor (take that, so-called penis) and a down-to-earth demeanor. She's sweet, perverted, articulate and talkative. And she can't stop gushing about how much her fans mean to her – and when I have to cut her off to get a few last minute questions in, she doesn't pull a diva trip. She's cordial as can be. "I could talk to you forever, you're so cute," she says, almost in baby goo-goo, ga-ga talk.

Point is, Gaga doesn't sound like someone who just scored the best first-week sales of the year so far with "Born This Way," her opus that seems to position her as the Mother Teresa of music. Since we last spoke, nearly two years ago when "Just Dance" was charting, she was barely a blip on the pop scene. How quickly things can change.

This time, Gaga spoke about inspiring young gay people, why she cried for a week straight, what she'd do with an Ann Coulter-like kid and the legacy she wants to leave.

We have lots more to talk about this time than your love for Italian sausages.

(Laughs) I love Italian sausages ... as much as I love my own.

Don't take this the wrong way, but as a fashion icon I have to ask: What are you wearing?

I'm actually in a black bra and underwear. That's it. The top one is lace and the bottom one is just plain and silky. This is my daywear. I'm walking around my hotel room and I'm going to yoga soon, and I probably won't change. (Laughs)

How did you spend your last day off?

I watched "So You Think You Can Dance," and I've been planning my performances for the next few months for television and getting ready for the new tour.

That's work. That's not time off, Gaga.

(Laughs) I know, I know. I always do that. I'm sorry. I don't really take time off. I try, but I think I find comfort in my creativity. It's like a warm blanket for me, so I will end up in some sort of way creating something or writing something.

How do you feel about your role as a gay icon and a leader in the LGBT rights movement?

That's a really, really tall order and quite a description. I never set out to be a gay icon or become one or be revered as one, and I'm just really grateful to all the people that have believed in me and my music and my work. The most special thing of all has been that my sort of assimilation as a public figure has very organically stemmed out of who my natural friends were in high school.

See **Lady Gaga**, page 20

Photo: Nick Knight

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by Chris Azzopardi

Beyoncé does it her way on ballad-heavy ‘4.’ Plus: Jill Scott’s first CD in four years

Beyoncé, ‘4’

It might as well be a rhetorical question on Beyoncé’s fourth album, but she asks it anyway – “who runs the world?” Her answer, of course: “Girls.” Before that dud of a ditty, “Run the World (Girls),” even plays – it’s tagged on at the end almost like the forgotten child – it’s obvious that this girl is running her own world. (Queen Bey, indeed.) This, basically Beyoncé’s bi-curious project, isn’t meant for radio consumption; it’s not meant for shallow pop listeners or “Crazy in Love” lovers (which means, yes, there are some sluggish songs). In fact, this game-changer of an album might totally bomb. But, for better or worse, it will undoubtedly hold a special place in Beyoncé’s heart forever – and in those of her fans. It’s off to a low-key start with “1+1,” which seems to establish two things: Girl can sing (duh) and hang with the cool electric-guitar kids. She’s back to her old man-slaying self on “Best Thing I Never Had,” a kiss-off whose “you showed your ass” line would seem more awkward if Beyoncé wasn’t selling it within every inch of its soaring, searing life. Other tracks, like the synthy sweet “I Miss You,” come off more Alicia Keys than sass-master. That Beyoncé doesn’t sound like herself isn’t necessarily a bad thing, especially on “Love on Top,” a jolly jolt of ’80s throwback pop with an easy, breezy style that’s practically pre-crack Whitney. By the time she gets to Diane Warren’s penultimate “I Was Here,” a powerful ballad about finding your purpose in life, it’s clear that a big part of Beyoncé’s legacy is in this album. *Grade: B*

Jill Scott, ‘The Light of the Sun’

For all the happiness Jill Scott recounts on leadoff “Blessed,” her first album since 2007 isn’t exactly a peachy play. Heartbreak haunts the Philly neo-soul singer as she practices what she’s been preaching since she dropped “Who is Jill Scott?” 11 years ago – resilience and empowerment. Those themes are threaded throughout this earthy, old-school album, a vastly experimental project that embraces bold moves (the most ambitious being the jazzy nine-minute groove “Le BOOM Vent Suite”) and a plethora of genres, from soul to funk and hip-hop, even jazz. On “All Cried Out (Redux)” she’s joined by Doug E. Fresh’s beat-boxing booms, and her and Eve go all independent woman on the swaggering “Shame.” “Some Other Time” has her second-guessing a good date in a cool stream-of-consciousness style; she throws out a prayer on “Hear My Call” and makes musical magic with Anthony Hamilton on the romantic “So in Love” – both songs are vocal showcases for Scott, who has absolute control over her wonderfully expressive instrument. And she never lets it go to waste on “The Light of the Sun,” effortlessly singing and scatting – without Auto-Tune. But the disc still drags in parts with too many mid-tempos that don’t sit and escapable turns at feminist poetry (see “Womanifesto”). Take away a few tracks and Scott’s return to R&B would truly be as blessed as her. *Grade: B-*

Also Out

Duncan Sheik, ‘Covers ’80s’

The absurdity of the title alone would almost be enough to dismiss Duncan Sheik’s time warp. To contemporize the synth-pop of that era, the one-hit wonder – remember “Barely Breathing”? – molds these 12 songs into his minimalistic style. Meaning, he makes them boring. At least his taste in tracks from that decade is impressive, with covers of Depeche Mode and The Smiths, but an album of lullabies would have more life than this batch of snoozy redos. Only one of the familiar covers, Thompson Twins’ “Hold Me Now,” reaches a timbre that doesn’t sound like bedtime music. The rest requires a Red Bull.

Death Cab for Cutie, ‘Codes and Keys’

On their best album since 2003’s breakout gem “Transatlanticism,” the indie rock foursome is in shake-up mode, shooting for some of their heyday glory before things went so-so. They’re also more positive than ever. “You Are a Tourist” cranks with swelling ambiance and optimism, which also finds a place on the semi-acoustic closer “Stay Young, Go Dancing.” But “St. Peter’s Cathedral” is the greatest find among the 11 tracks, a sprawling exploration of life after death that builds into a moving cacophony of noise.

Reach Chris Azzopardi at chris@pridesource.com.

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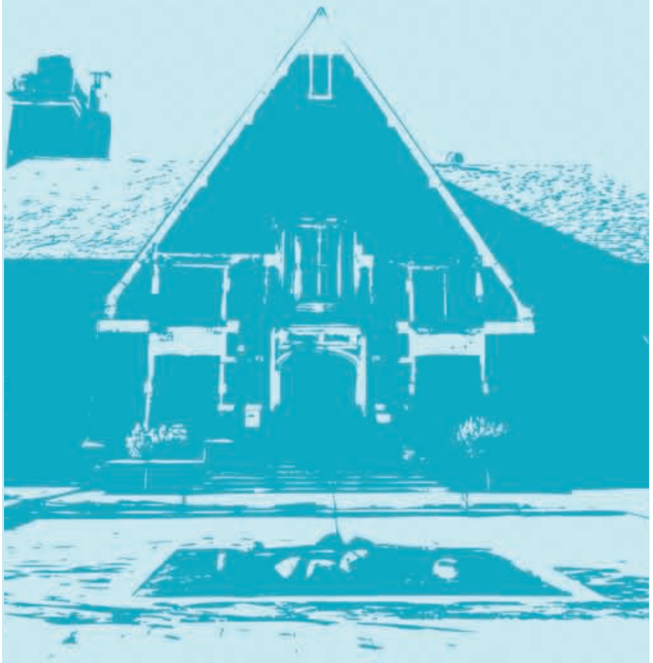

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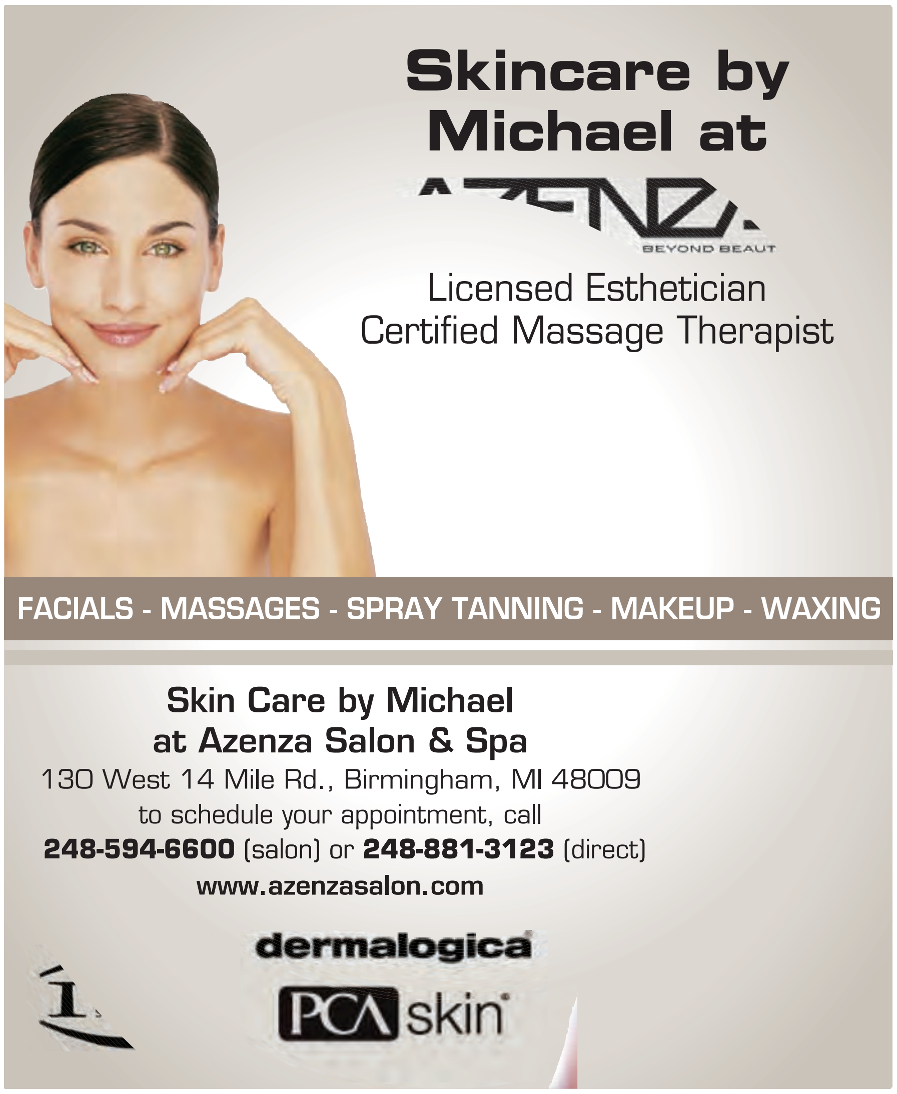

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Augusta champions idealism in 'La Mancha'

BY BRIDGETTE M. REDMAN

"Man of La Mancha," now playing at the Augusta Barn Theater, remains a classic worth seeing, especially if you sit in the front half of the barn. From the back half, it becomes more difficult to follow as important lines are delivered so softly that they cannot be heard.

Opening in a prison common area where Cervantes has been thrown to await his hearing before the Spanish Inquisition, the play transforms into the tale of the would-be knight errant Don Quixote. Famous for tilting at windmills and fighting imaginary ogres, the knight wishes to right all wrongs and be an idealist who dreams the impossible dreams in a world where gritty realism is ugly and cruel.

The action moves back and forth between the prison and Cervantes' tale of an old man who has taken leave of his sanity and plans to live as a knight, even though knights have not existed in Spain for 300 years when the story takes place. Robert Newman, an Augusta Barn veteran and star of the soap opera "Guiding Light" for 28 years, moves easily between Cervantes and Don Quixote, transforming in age and looks before the eyes of the prisoners who have him on trial. In both roles he is the idealist who argues that it is better to see things as they should be than to see them as they are.

Newman also brings a strong voice to such numbers as "Man of La Mancha" and "The Quest/The Impossible Dream." While his singing always carries, it is his speaking voice that has the most difficulty carrying to the back, especially when Cervantes is at his most dejected. He does create a very likeable Don Quixote, one that is easy to see why Sancho follows him so readily.

Roy Brown's Sancho is equally likeable for his loyalty and the way he looks after his master, smoothing over the insane acts with appeals to those around them to humor the older man.

Roy Brown and Robert Newman in "Man of La Mancha." Photo: Barn Theatre

REVIEW

Man of La Mancha

Barn Theatre, 13351 W. M-96, Augusta.
Tuesday-Sunday through July 10. $34.
269-731-4121.
www.barntheatre.com

Penelope Alex reprises the role of Aldonza, the kitchen wench who Don Quixote looks upon as his lady, Dulcinea, whom he has known all his life in his dreams, though they meet only upon his arrival at the inn, or in Don Quixote's mind, the castle. Alex presents an especially strong Aldonza who is confused by the knight errant's attention, certain that he wants from her what every other man wants.

The chorus of prisoners, muleteers and dancers are committed to their parts and are vocally strong. The song "Little Bird" transforms from sweet in its first presentation to creepy in its reprise. Director and Stage Manager Brendan Ragotzy is to be especially commended for stepping into the role of Pedro after the original actor was injured during final dress rehearsal. Ragotzy brings a cruelty to the role and performs without book despite having stepped into the role only two days prior.

David Vogel and Eric Tsuchiyama deserve special mention as the horse and mule that Quixote and Sancho ride. Despite full-headed masks, they are quite expressive and great fun to watch.

The props were created by James Knox, a long-time Barn staff member who died this past Monday. Some of the props, according to Ragotzy, were from when the Barn did the musical back in the '70s.

The Dale Wasserman musical has long been a classic, and the Augusta Barn Theatre does it justice with a deep set, authentically ragged costuming and strong performances.

The New Theatre Project is on the move again

YPSILANTI– The New Theatre Project announces another move to downtown Ypsilanti and a postponement of the world premiere of "Posing." Unfortunately, the company faced an involuntary release from its space at 220 Felch St. in Ann Arbor after conflicts with the landlord.

TNTP will be moving to 130 W. Michigan Ave. into the newly opened Mix Performance Space. The company will be sharing space with the inaugural show from a new production company that will be releasing additional information sometime in July, as well as a number of local artists wishing to hold performances.

"We're disappointed that our Ann Arbor space didn't work out," says Artistic Director Keith Paul Medelis, "but equally excited for the opportunities awaiting us in our storefront location in Ypsilanti and partnership with the folks at Mix."

"Posing," originally scheduled for July, will now open Aug. 5 and play at 8 p.m. on Fridays-Sundays until Aug. 21. Additional pay-what-you-can preview performances will be held on August 2-4 at 8 p.m.

"Posing" has changed locations and dates. Photo: Keith Paul Medelis

"Posing" exposes the tensions between sex and love, and the consequences of staying young forever. "Posing" will be under the direction of Medelis and will feature Evan Mann and Ben Stange.

Changes to the remaining season, including some exciting additions, will be announced shortly.

Ticket prices remain at $15 and $10 for students, seniors and industry (cash or check only). Tickets can be reserved by calling or texting The New Theatre Project box office at 734-645-9776 or emailing tickets@thenewtheatreproject.org.

For more details, visit www.thenewtheatreproject.org.

To read the complete review, log on to ...
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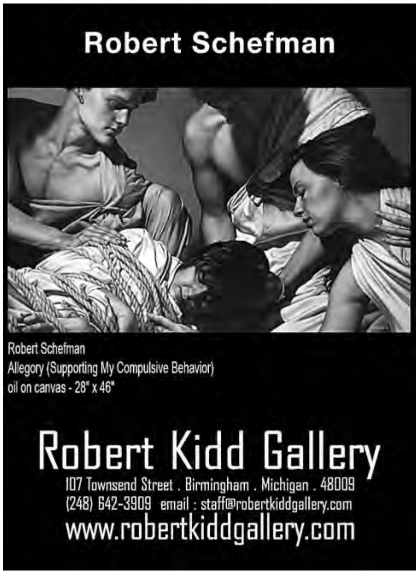
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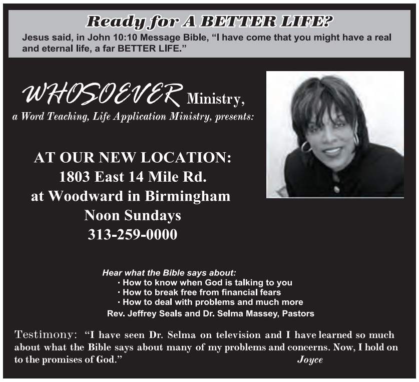
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Editor's Picks

Outings

Motor City Pride hit Detroit, the Washtenaw Pride Picnic returned, Saginaw held the first ever Tri-City LGBT Pride, and West Michigan attracted more than 7,000 attendants. 2011 has had quite the Pride season, but it isn't over just yet. Battle Creek's first-ever series of Pride Events begins Friday with the White Party at the Partners Bar downtown.

The following day, Battle Creek will celebrate Pride with a Family Picnic in Willard Beach Park and the Pride Night Bash back at Partners that evening, offering food, drinks and entertainment. Last, the festivities end solemnly with a candlelit memorial vigil, remembering those who have lost their lives in the LGBT movement.

BC Pride will run July 8-10. For more information, email battlecreekpride@yahoo.com or contact organizer Larry Dillon at 269-420-8170.

Music & More

Nashville based singer-songwriter Gillian Welch's dark Appalachian Americana musical stylings has earned her and guitarist David Rawlings an immense following in the bluegrass and indie-folk crowds. Her contributions to the Coen Brothers' film "O Brother, Where Art Thou?" earned the album a Grammy Award for Album of the Year in 2002.

Welch has collaborated and recorded with numerous successful musucians such as Alison Krauss, Ryan Adams and The Decemberists. Her latest album, "The Harrow & The Harvest," which dropped last month, was her first record release in eight years.

Gillian Welch performs at the Royal Oak Music Theatre at 8 p.m. July 23. Tickets cost $29.50 and are available now at royaloakmusictheatre.com.

Theater

From the company that brought you "The Facts of Life: The Lost Episode" comes another hilarious parody of a beloved TV show, "Thank You For Being a Friend." Who Wants Cake? is thrilled to bring this unofficial musical parody inspired by "The Golden Girls" to Ferndale's Ringwald Theatre for an exclusive four-week run beginning Saturday, July 16.

Four women are spending their golden years together in a bungalow in Miami. All is peaceful until former N*SYNCer Lance Bass moves in next door and his rowdy all-night gay sex parties end up disrupting the girls' beauty sleep. Please note: This parody contains adult situations.

"Thank You For Being a Friend" will play Saturdays and Mondays at 8 p.m. and Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m. through Aug. 8. Don't miss your chance to see your favorite Ringwald guys dress as your favorite "Golden Girls!"

The Ringwald Theatre is located at 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. Tickets can be purchased at www.WhoWantsCakeTheatre.com or at the theater box office.

OUTINGS

Wednesday, July 6

LGBTQ Affirming Discussion, 5 p.m. Looking closely at this passage from 1 Corinthians and show that the original Greek words translated as homosexual in a few Bible versions don't accurately reflect our modern understanding. Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ-Welcoming And Affirming Church, 125 S. Pennsylvania Ave., **Lansing**. 517-484-7434. PilgrimUCC.com

Thursday, July 7

Jewish Gay Network Family & Friends, 7 p.m. LGBT group discussing issues impacting the LGBT and allied community. Meets 1st Thursday of every month. The Jewish Gay Network, 6600 West Maple Road, **West Bloomfield**. 248-432-5661. jgnmi.org

Friday, July 8

Older Lesbians Organizing, 7 p.m. Provides older Lesbians with the chance to meet like minded women in their common struggles, to share mutual interests and to play and work together. Meets the 2nd Friday of every month. Older Lesbians Organizing, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-678-2478. jasmithers@sbcglobal.net

Womyn's Film Night, 7 p.m. Film: Girls Kissing. Barbara Lee's fast-paced documentary explores lesbianism from a variety of angles, including how pop culture is changing society's outlook on the subject. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

White Party, 10 p.m. First annual Battle Creek Pride. DJ, music, and activities. Tickets: $3. Battle Creek Pride, 910 North Ave., **Battle Creek**. 269-420-8170. battlecreekpride@yahoo.com

Saturday, July 9

Jim Knox Memorial Service, 1:30 p.m. Memorializing founder of CARES and KGLRC, Jim Knox, who passed on June 27. CARES, KGLRC and the Barn Theatre, 13351 M-96, **Augusta**. kglrc.org

Pride Family Picnic, 11 a.m. Free picnic food, games, band, music, drawings, swimming and activities. Open to LGBT and allied community. Battle Creek Pride, Goguac Lake, **Battle Creek**. 269-420-8170. battlecreekpride@yahoo.com

Pride Night Bash, 9 p.m. Show featuring drag queens, male and female dancers and entertainers, drink specials and other activities. Cover: $5. Battle Creek Pride, 910 North Ave., **Battle Creek**. 269-420-8170. battlecreekpride@yahoo.com

Sunday, July 10

Family Week Saugatuck, 8 a.m. Vacation week for LGBT families. Six days of family activities such as picnics, crafts, pool parties, etc. Families are responsible for meals and accommodations. Information about lodging and individual events provided at rfgl.org. Rainbow Families Great Lakes, Various addresses in **Saugatuck**. rfgl.org

PFLAG Detroit Meeting, 2 p.m. Support groups, social gathering, community announcements, program presentations, guest speakers, and dinner. Every 2nd Sunday of the month. PFLAG, 3333 Coolidge Hwy, **Troy**. 248-656-2875. pflagdetroit.org

Rainbow Book Club, 4:30 p.m. Book club dedicated to reading and discussing classic and contemporary lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer literature. Meeting since before 1998, every second Sunday of the month. Rainbow Book Club, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734-678-2478. catherine.herne@gmail.com

HARC Provided HIV/AIDS Testing, 5 p.m. HARC provides anonymous and free HIV counseling, testing and referral services through its outreach at the Jim Toy Community Center. HARC, 319 Braun Court, **Ann Arbor**. 734 6782478. hivaidsresource.org/hiv-testing

Candlelight Memorial Vigil, 9 p.m. Remembering those who have lost their lives in the LGBT movement. Conclusion of Battle Creek Pride. Battle Creek Pride, Downtown, **Battle Creek**. 269-420-8170. battlecreekpride@yahoo.com

Monday, July 11

LGBT Adoptive Parent Support Group, 7 p.m. Meet with other LGBT families and be supported in your adoption process or adoptive parenting. Hands Across The Water Adoption and Social Services Agency, 2890 Carpenter Road, Suite 600, **Ann Arbor**. 734-477-0135. hatw.org

Wednesday, July 13

LGBTQ Affirming Discussion, 5 p.m. Considering the story of Sodom and Gomorrah and show how it does not apply to sexual orientation as we understand it today. Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ-Welcoming And Affirming Church, 125 S. Pennsylvania Ave., **Lansing**. 517-484-7434. mike@pilgrimucc.com PilgrimUCC.com

Situation Discussions, 5:15 p.m. Discussing "What would you do if you were fired for being gay?" LGBT in the Park, 620 W. Woodward Heights , Hazel Park. 248-460-3251. jffryoliver@yahoo.com

LGBTIQ Support Group, 7 p.m. An inclusive environment for all gender who are healing from domestic and/or sexual assault. YWCA of KGLRC, 629 Pioneer St., **Kalamazoo**. 269-349-4234.

Thursday, July 14

Meet 'n Greet, 7 p.m. Meet new people, socialize and discuss age-relevant issues. Dinner at local restaurant afterwards. Ages 18-33. Metro Detroit LGBT 20Somethings, 222 E. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. the20somethings.org

Friday, July 15

Womyn's Film Night, 7 p.m. Film-Room in Rome. Elena Anaya and Natasha Yarovenko star in this provocative drama about Alba and Natasha, two women who meet in Rome and end up in a hotel room where they bare their bodies and souls to each other. Affirmations, 290 W. Nine Mile Road, **Ferndale**. 248-398-7105. goaffirmations.org

Drag Queen Bingo, 8 p.m. "This ain't your grandma's bingo." Hosts Sabin, Trixie Deluxxe or September Murphy. Open to all 18+. Refreshments and bingo food fare. Reservations available by phone. Five15, 515 S. Washington , **Royal Oak**. 248-515-2551. five15.net

Sunday, July 17

PFLAG Ann Arbor Meeting, 1 a.m. 3rd Sunday of every month. Support group and monthly speaker at each meeting. PFLAG Ann Arbor, 306 N. Division St., **Ann Arbor**. pflagaa.org

PFLAG Tri-Cities Meeting, 2 p.m. Every 3rd Sunday of the month. Support groups including monthly speakers. PFLAG Tri-Cities, 2525 Hemmeter, **Saginaw**. 989-941-1458. pflag@pflag-mbs.org

MUSIC & MORE

CLASSICAL

Kerrytown Concert House Louis Nagel performing Franz Schubert. Tickets: $30-15, $5 students. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. July 7, 4 p.m. July 10. 734-769-2999. kerrytownconcerthouse.com

MSU College of Music Ulla Laage in the Summer Carillon Series, established in 1996 through generosity of Dr. Milton Muelder. MSU Beaumont Tower, 102 Music Building, East Lansing. 6 p.m. July 6. 517-353-9958. music.msu.edu

MSU College of Music Eddy Marien and Tom Lee, native to Belgium in the Summer Carillon Series, established in 1996 through generosity of Dr. Milton Muelder. MSU Beaumont Tower, 102 Music Building, East Lansing. 6 p.m. July 13. 517-353-9958. music.msu.edu

MSU College of Music Ray McLellan, Michigan State University Carillonneur, performs in the Summer Carillon Series, established in 1996 through generosity of Dr. Milton Muelder. MSU Beaumont Tower, 102 Music Building, East Lansing. 6 p.m. July 20. 517-353-9958. music.msu.edu

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra "DSO at the Ford House" DSO performing in the historic Ford House, followed by a fireworks finale. Tickets: $23.50. Edsel and Eleanor Ford House, 20900 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn. 8:30 p.m. July 8, 8:30 p.m. July 9. 313-982-6001. detroitsymphony.com

CONCERTS

Farmington Downtown Development Authority "Rhythmz in Riley Park " Friday night concerts in downtown Farmington. Walter E. Sundquist Pavilion, 33113 Grand River Ave., Farmington. June 10-Aug. 26. 248-473-7276. downtownfarmington.org

Fox Theatre R. Kelly with special guest Marsha Ambrosius. Tickets: $49-105. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. July 9, 7:30 p.m. July 10. 313-471-6611. r-kelly.com

Gem Theatre Jess Godwin. Tickets: $10. Gem Theatre, 2135 Bonnie View Dr., Royal Oak. 10 p.m. July 15. 3134184898. gemtheatre.com

Kerrytown Concert House "Hard Road Trio" Featuring Steve Smith, Chris Sandes and Anne Luna. Tickets: $25-10, $5 students. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. July 12. 734-769-2999. kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Kerrytown Concert House "Manner Effect" Young musicians performing Jazz of the New York music scene. Tickets: $25-10, $5 students. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. July 15. 734-769-2999. kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Olympia Entertainment "Cheap Trick" Tickets:$38-$48 Motor City Casino's Soundboard, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. July 15. 800-745-3000. olympiaentertainment.com

Olympia Entertainment "Steely Dan" Shuffle Diplomacy Twenty Eleven Tour. Tickets: $45.50-85.50. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. July 16. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

Olympia Entertainment "A Perfect Circle" Tickets:$35-59.50. Fox Theatre, 2211 Woodward Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. July 8, 8 p.m. July 8. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

Olympia Entertainment "Maze" Featuring Frankie Beverly with special guest T.K. Kirkland. Tickets: $68-93. Sound Board Theater, 2901 Grand River Ave., Detroit. 8 p.m. July 7, 8 p.m. July 8. 866-752-9622 . olympiaentertainment.com

Royal Oak Music Theater "Cut Copy" Tickets: $20 in advance, $24 door. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W Fourth St, Royal Oak. 8 p.m. July 9. 248-399-2980 . royaloakmusictheatre.com

Royal Oak Music Theatre Gillian Welch. Tickets: $30-35. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. 8 p.m. July 23. 248-399-2980 . royaloakmusictheatre.com

The Ark "Boulder Acoustic Society" Tickets: $15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. July 6. 734-761-1800. theark.org

The Ark Steve Forbert. Tickets: $25. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. July 16. 313-761-1818. theark.org

The Ark "The Tartan Terrors" Tickets: $15. The Ark, 316 S. Main St., Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. July 14. 313-761-1818. theark.org

The Ark Terrance Simien. Tickets: $15. The Ark, 316 S. Main, Ann Arbor. 8 p.m. July 12. 734-761-1800. theark.org

FESTIVALS

AEG Live "Global Dance Festival" Featuring Skrillex, Porter Robinson and Zedd. Tickets: $30. Royal Oak Music Theatre, 318 W. Fourth St., Royal Oak. 8 p.m. July 16. 248-399-2980 . royaloakmusictheatre.com

Comerica Park "Vans Warped Tour 2011" Punk rock extravaganza. Tickets: $34-37. Comerica Park, Comerica Park parking lot, Detroit. 11 a.m. July 8. 313-471-6611. OlympiaEntertainment.com

OTHER

Windover Women's Resort "1st Annual W.I.N.D. Cares 5k Walk" 5K walk to support breast cancer, leukemia or the human race. Call for more information. Windover Women's Resort, 3596 Blakely Road, Owendale. 1 p.m. July 9. 989-375-2586 . windoverwomensresort.com

Warren/Conner Development Coalition "Eastside Farmers Market" Fresh produce, healthy foods, and unique artisan items. Everything locally made and sold directly by the growers and producers. Accepts cash, Bridge Card, Double Up Food Bucks, WIC, Project Fresh, credit, and debit. Weekly music and entertainment. Mack Alter Square, 14820 Mack Ave., Detroit . June 11-Oct. 1. 313-571-8200. facebook.com/eastsidefarmersmarket

Yellow Door Art Market "Santa's Summer Stop" Kids of all ages invited to meet and greet Santa on his summer vacation at Yellow Door Art Market. Award-winning author & bonified Santa Claus, Jeffrey Schatzer of Bellaire will be donning his Hawaiian shirt, flip flops and long white beard as he signs copies of his Christmas themed books starring him. Yellow Door Art Market, 3141 W. 12 Mile Road, Berkley. 9 a.m. July 16. 248-336-2038. yellowdoorartmarket.com

THEATER

CIVIC/COMMUNITY THEATER

Come, Beauty $12. Ann Arbor Civic Theatre at A2CT Studio Theater, 322 W. Ann St., Ann Arbor. July 15 - 17. 734-971-2228. a2ct.org

Reasons to be Pretty Free. Contains strong sexuality, adult language, and adult situations. Center Stage Jackson at The Fourth Wall, 701 Page Ave., Jackson. 8 p.m. July 9. 517-817-9974. centerstagejackson.org

PROFESSIONAL

1964...The Tribute $20 pavilion, $10 lawn. Meadow Brook Music Festival, 3554 Walton Blvd., Rochester Hills. 8 p.m. July 8. 1-800-745-3000. palacenet.com

And The Creek Don't Rise Previews July 7-10 & 14. ($15) $18-$24. Williamston Theatre, 122 S. Putnam Rd., Williamston. July 7 - Aug. 14. 517-655-7469. williamstontheatre.org

Chicago $26-$39.75. Mason Street Warehouse, 400 Culver St., Saugatuck. Through July 17. 269-857-4898. masonstreet warehouse.org

Children of Eden Plays in rotating repertory. Hope Summer Repertory Theatre at DeWitt Theatre, 141 E. 12th St., Holland. Through Aug. 12. 616-395-7890. hope.edu/hsrt

Comedy Mondays $5 for an all-night pass. Dog Story Theater, 7 Jefferson Ave. SE , Grand Rapids. Through July 25. 616-894-1252. dogstorytheater.com

Consider the Oyster $25-$40. The Purple Rose Theatre Company, 137 Park St., Chelsea. Through Sep. 3. 734-433-7673. purplerosetheatre.org

Ernie $20-$25. City Theatre, 2301 Woodward Ave., Detroit. Through July 31. 313-471-6611. olympiaentertainment.com

Fridays and Saturdays at Go Comedy! Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. Through July 30. 248-327-0575. gocomedy.net

Man of La Mancha $34. Barn Theatre, 13351 W. M-96, Augusta. Through July 10. 269-731-4121. barntheatre.com

Much Ado About Nothing $25. Blackbird Theatre at West Park, 300 N. Seventh Ave., Ann Arbor. July 15 - July 29. 734-332-3848. blackbirdtheatre.org

Much Ado About Nothing Previews July 14-15 ($25-$31). $30-$36. Michigan Shakespeare Festival, Baughman Theatre at Jackson Community College Potter Center, 2111 Emmons Rd., Jackson. Plays in repertory July 14 - Aug. 5. 517-998-3673. michiganshakespearefestival.com

Next Fall $22-$41. Performance Network Theatre, 120 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor. Through July 10. 734-663-0681. performancenetwork.org

Return to the Forbidden Planet $10-$26. Hope Summer Repertory Theatre, DeWitt Theatre, 141 E. 12th St., Holland. Plays in rotating repertory July 8 - Aug. 11. 616-395-7890. hope.edu/hsrt

Shoot Faster, Dear Brother, I'm Dying! $10. Dog Story Theatre, 7 Jefferson Ave. SE, Grand Rapids. July 14 - 16. 616-894-1252. dogstorytheater.com

Sundays at Go Comedy! $7 for the night. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. gocomedy.net

Taking Steps $8-$19. Hope Summer Repertory Theatre at DeWitt Theatre, 141 E. 12th St., Holland. Through July 26. 616-395-7890. hope.edu/hsrt

Tartuffe Previews July 16-17 ($25-$31). $30-$36. Michigan Shakespeare Festival at Baughman Theatre at Jackson Community College Potter Center, 2111 Emmons Rd., Jackson. Plays in repertory July 16 - Aug. 6. 517-998-3673. michiganshakespearefestival.com

Thank You for Being a Friend $20 general, $10 on Mondays. Who Wants Cake? at The Ringwald Theatre, 22742 Woodward Ave., Ferndale. July 16 - Aug. 8. 248-545-5545. whowantscaketheatre.com

The Full Monty Adult themes, language. $24-$26. Tibbits Summer Theatre, 14 S. Hanchett St., Coldwater. July 7 - 16. 517-278-6029. tibbits.org

The Music Man Previews July 7. $28. The Encore Musical Theatre, 3126 Broad St., Dexter. July 7 - 31. 734-268-6200. theencoretheatre.org

Thursdays at Go Comedy! $15. Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. Through Aug. 25. 248-327-0575. gocomedy.net

Twelve Angry Men $15-20. What A Do Theatre at First United Methodist Church, 111 East Michigan Ave., Battle Creek. July 15 - July 30. 773-744-8598. whatado.org

Urinetown $29. Farmers Alley Theatre, 221 Farmers Alley, Kalamazoo. July 15 - 31. 269-343-2727. farmersalleytheatre.com

Wednesdays at Go Comedy! Go Comedy! Improv Theater, 261 E. Nine Mile Rd., Ferndale. 248-327-0575. gocomedy.net

YOUNG AUDIENCES

Back When the Animals Talked $7. Tibbits Summer Theatre, 15 S. Hanchett St., Coldwater. Through July 9. 517-278-6029. tibbits.org

Charlotte's Web $8 adult, $5 children. Hilberry Theatre, 4743 Cass Ave., Detroit. Through July 8. 313-577-2972. hilberry.com

If You Give a Mouse a Cookie $15 reserved, $10 general. Meadow Brook Music Festival, 3554 Walton Blvd., Rochester Hills. July 14. 1-800-745-3000. palacenet.com

Kolobok $10 adult, $5 children. PuppetART, 25 E. Grand River, Detroit. Saturdays through July 30. 313-961-7777. puppetart.org

Princess Katie and Racer Steve Free. Music Hall, 350 Madison, Detroit. 10:30 a.m. July 12. 313-887-8500. musichall.org

Sleeping Beauty $7. Tibbits Summer Theatre, 14 S. Hanchett St., Coldwater. July 15 - 23. 517-278-6029. tibbits.org

The Borrowers $10. Hope Summer Repertory Theatre in Studio Theatre in the DeWitt Center, 141 E. 12th St., Holland. Plays in rotating repertory July 13 - Aug. 12. 616-395-7890. hope.edu/hsrt

ART'N' AROUND

The Rust Belt Market "A Pinch of Spice and More" Rust Belt Market for vintage, design, and art. Woodward Ave. & 9 Mile Road, North West Corner, Ferndale. June 25-Nov. 20. 246-622-1621. apinchofspiceandmore.com

Craig Mitchell Smith Glass Gallery "Glass in the Garden" Display of larger than life glass art in the garden. Admission: $5. Dow Gardens, Midland MI, 1809 Eastman Ave., Midland. May 22-July 31. 800-362-4874. dowgardens.org

Cranbrook Art Museum "Saarinem House and Garden" rare integration of art, architecture, design and nature's total work of art. Designed in the late 1920s, Saarinen House served as the home and studio of the Finnish-American designer Eliel Saarinen and Loja Saarinen from 1930 through 1950. Cranbrook Art Museum, 39221 Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills. May 2-Sep. 30. 877-462-7262. cranbrookart.edu

Downriver Council for the Arts "Jured Photography Exhibit" The DCA is accepting entries for a juried photography exhibit at the Wyandotte Arts Center. Professional and amateur photographers can submit up to four entries. A non-refundable $15 entry fee is required for all entries. Exhibit begins Sept. 8. Wyandotte Arts Center, 2306 4th St., Wyandotte. May 1-Aug. 31. 734-324-7278. Farmington Downtown Development Authority "Farmington Farmers & Artisans Market" Each Saturday. Fresh Michigan produce, baked goods, locally produced honey, handcrafted soaps and emollients, fine art and jewelry, photography and a variety of unique, artisan-made products. Walter E. Sundquist Pavilion, 33113 Grand River Ave., Farmington. May 28-Oct. 29. 248-473-7276. downtownfarmington.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Something Waits Beneath It" Early work by Andrew Wyeth, 1939-1969 is an intimate exhibition of early and seldom seen works by the young Andrew Wyeth, including watercolors of Maine and Pennsylvania made from 1939 through the 1960s. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. June 1-Aug. 7. 810.234.1695. flintarts.org

Flint Institute of Arts "Edmund Lewandowski: Precisionism and Beyond" This is the first retrospective exhibition of Milwaukee-born artist Edmund Lewandowski (1914-98), the preeminent second-generation Precisionist, who achieved recognition for extending the style of Precisionism beyond the East Coast and into the Midwest, making it a national style. Flint Institute of Arts, 1120 E. Kearsley St., Flint. June 1-Aug. 7. 810.234.1695. flintarts.org

Henry Ford Museum "Discovering the Civil War" Tickets: $15 adults, $11 youth. Henry Ford Museum, 20900 Oakwood Blvd., Dearborn. May 21-Sep. 5. 313-982-6001. thehenryford.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "Portrait and Presence" Contemporary portraiture pursues a complex and personal approach to the genre's traditional representation of the subject's visage and social identity. Admission: Free. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park St., Kalamazoo. May 1-July 20. 269-349-7775. kiarts.org

Kalamazoo Institute of Arts "The Chinese Scholar's Brush" Works from the Albert and Betty Chang Collection. Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, 314 S. Park , Kalamazoo. May 7-Aug. 27. 269-349-7775. kiarts.org

Kerrytown Concert House "A Matter of Light and Depth" Photography by Angela and Jim George, using light to give depth. Kerrytown Concert House, 415 N. Fourth Ave., Ann Arbor. July 1-Aug. 12. 734-769-2999. kerrytownconcerthouse.com

Kresge Art Museum "Hiraki Sawa: Other Dwellings" Sawa's videos are intimate, sometimes hermetic meditations on place and the wonderfully odd activities that can occur in imaginative dimensions. MSU, Auditorium & Physics Road, East Lansing. April 30-July 21. artmuseum.msu.edu. 517-884-0659

Kresge Art Museum "Visualizing Sound" Harry Bertoia's sound-producing, beryllium copper sculpture, Sound Piece, 1978, will interact with a digital visualizer in this performative sculpture experience. MSU, Auditorium & Physics Road, East Lansing. April 30-July 21. artmuseum.msu.edu. 517-884-0659

Lawrence Street Gallery "Summer Invitational" Annual exhibit featuring newest work by local artists. Showcases over 50 works in two and three-dimensional media. The Lawrence Street Gallery, 22620 Woodward, Ferndale. June 29-July 30. 248-544-0394. lawrencestreetgallery.com

MOCAD "barely there" Group exhibition featuring James Lee Byars, Luis Camnitzer, Jason Dodge, Pable Helguera, Christoph Keller, Lee Loazno, Rivane and Sergio, Neuenschwander, Wilfredo Prieto, Pascale Marthine Tayou and Adolf Wolfli. Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave., Detroit. May 27-July 31. 313-832-6622. mocadetroit.org

The Detroit Institute "Annual Detroit Public Schools Student Exhibition" Art by Detroit Public School students, from kindergartners to high school seniors, is showcased in this annual exhibition. Among the variety of objects on view are paintings, drawings, ceramics, collages, photographs, videos, and jewelry. Detroit Institute of Arts, 2100 Woodward, Detroit. May 1-July 16. 313-833-7900. dia.org

The Scarab Club "Family Ties Exhibition" Showcasing the work of artists within family units. The Scarab Club, 217 Farnsworth, Detroit. July 8-Aug. 13. 313-831-1250. scarabclub.org

University of Michigan "Amalia Pica" London-based Argentinian artist's investigations into perception, time, and memory, as well as a desire to explore how particular gestures read in different cultural contexts, pursued across a diverse body of work in sculpture, photography, film, and installation, as well as temporary interventions on buildings, monuments, and objects. University of Michigan Museum of Art, 525 South State St., Ann Arbor. May 28-Sep. 18. 734-763-4186.

University of Michigan Museum of Art "Story time at the Museum" Children ages 4-7 are invited to hear a story in the galleries. Parents must accompany children. Information Desk, 525 S. State St., Ann Arbor. June 16-Aug. 13. 734-763-4186. umma.umich.edu

University of Michigan Museum of Art "Multiple Impressions: Contemporary Chinese Woodblock Prints" 114 works by 41 artists, including Xu Bing, Kang Ning, Song Yuanwen, Chen Qi, He Kun, and Fang Limin, as well as many other accomplished printmakers. University Of Michigan Museum Of Art, 525 South State St., Ann Arbor. July 16-Oct. 23. 734-763-4186.

Washtenaw Farm "Ann Arbor Antiques Market" Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds, 5055 Saline Road, Ann Arbor . 7 a.m. July 16. 937-875-0808. annarborantiquesmarket.com

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► Lady Gaga

Continued from p. 13

I had a lot of gay friends growing up, not even realizing they were gay. We didn't really talk about it and I went to theater school and I did a lot of shows, so I guess it never really mattered to me if they were gay or straight – and we never really talked about it. We just loved talking about music and art and theater and fashion. So now it's less about being a leader and more just about being a part of my generation and being part of the fight for equality that I feel is part of who I am and part of my childhood, and part of where I'm going.

The message you stand for as a public figure – about being yourself no matter who you are – is also a big part of "Born This Way."

The album was inspired by the spirit of the fans, the spirit of the show and the spirit of people all over the world every night talking to me about social justice and sharing their stories with me and me realizing that my mission with music was driven in a very specific way at this point. So social justice has to be the most paramount issue that I address on the album.

I wish I knew who you were when I was a teenager. Young people these days are lucky to have such a role model.

That's so sweet. Thanks for saying that. I hope that I can really be that, and I hope that they know that it's so genuine and so authentic.

Which album gave you a sense of belonging and allowed you to be yourself when you were a kid?

I always talk about Green Day, because "Dookie" was the first album that I went to buy on my own. I think because I got bullied in school there was something I really appreciated about punk culture. It allowed me to feel unified with something that was separate from my community at school. Even though I didn't have a lot of punk friends or I didn't go to punk shows – because when I was 13, my mother would never have allowed me to leave the house and go downtown to see a punk show – just having the album in my hands and reading the lyrics and listening to the music made me feel like I was a punk, feel like a Green Day fan, feel like I was part of a union that was separate from my situation. That's really carried through into my music and my dream and my message. But what's been so great is social media. Unlike when I was a kid, my fans now have a way to get to know each other and be connected through social media so that the culture can grow.

And you're using social networking a lot as a political platform, urging fans to step up in the fight for equality.

Oh yeah. I just got on Twitter and I was firing away like I was on the Senate floor. I couldn't stop because I think to myself, almost instantly, there are 11 million people who are receiving this message from me and they have to know what's going on. Even if I just get five people to call in New York, I can make that small bit of difference.

If you had a daughter and you found out she was going to be the next Ann Coulter, what would you do?

Oh. I'd have to have a sit-down with her.

What's been the most rewarding moment of your career so far?

So many different things. It was a very, very huge shock for me when I heard the album sales for "Born This Way." I just cried for, like, a week straight. (Laughs) It was seven full days of rainwater tears. I think I could've filled an entire ocean of gratitude. I just worked so hard on the music and I cared so much that the fans loved it, and all that mattered to me was they loved it. The feedback of the music and of the videos has been so wonderful.

Photo: Nick Knight

I sat down with the label and I talked to my team and we talked about the new album cycle and I said to them, "I don't want for the goal of this to be that we gain new fans. If we gain new fans, that's wonderful. But the goal for me is to strengthen my artistic evolution and strengthen the bond between the fans." That was the single most important thing to me. Not to sell more records, not to gain more fans, not to convert people that didn't like me before to like me now. That was not what I wanted. What I wanted to do was to look out into the crowd and know that they were stronger than ever, and the thing that has been the most exciting for me is to watch that happen, because what we have – what I have witnessed so far with the release of this album – is that the super fan section of my fans has grown.

This is basically a dedication to your Little Monsters, right?

It's a dedication, exactly. It's not fair-weather fans. These are real fans.

If you could be reincarnated as a real living monster, what would you come back as?

Myself. But I would have all my protrusions be real and I would be a real fairy monster.

How gay of you.

I know. But she would be mean and fierce, too. And have a fake mole. And I would be able to instantly change a wig with a thought in my mind or change my bone structure based on my thoughts.

It's like a drag queen's dream.

Yeah. It's my dream. It's every girl's dream! (Laughs)

Two of your songs are named after human features – "Hair" and "Teeth." What's the next body part you'll write about?

Who knows. I didn't even think of it that way. Where should I go next? I don't know. I've already been thinking about the next album, though. Don't shoot me.

Can you give us a glimpse into that one?

No, no. Stay on this one. We're not done yet. (Laughs) I am planning on making the "You and I" video, though, and I'm really excited about that.

Everyone talks about overexposure when you're as big of a star as you are. Does that worry you at all?

No. You're just a right or left click away from the other direction.

As one of the biggest superstars in the world, have you thought about the legacy you want to leave and what that might be?

Yes, I have. And it changes and grows. I would say that my wish is to be remembered as a cultural force, as someone who was fearless and unpredictable, who didn't care what anyone thought about what I have created but only cared that they thought about it.

BTL Horoscopes

Pay attention, Capricorn!

BY JACK FERTIG

Mercury in Leo, cranking up egos and voices, is at the end of a “yod” with Pluto and Chiron. The real challenge is to shut up, listen and adapt to difficult new realities. Venus making a T-square to Uranus and Pluto stresses relationships, forcing major adaptation. Your work is cut out!

ARIES (March 20 – April 19): Brash overconfidence is sure to get you into trouble. You do have what it takes, but consider slowly and carefully what your strongest virtues are. A little humility will give you perspective and enhance your strengths.

TAURUS (April 20 – May 20): You can get away with almost anything, but second-guessing yourself will ruin this lucky streak. Meditation aids focus, but don’t get trapped in distraction or dawdling. Stay clear on your ideals and purpose; they will pull you through.

GEMINI (May 21- June 20): As usual, your mouth is the surest opening to trouble. Think ahead! When in doubt, trust in your friends for appropriate guidelines. Meditative reflection is helpful, not just for verbal discipline, but for clarity in professional goals and partnership.

CANCER (June 21- July 22): Venus in your sign makes you more attractive, but not necessarily to whom you want to attract! Stick to your standards. Do not submit to pressure! A philosophical sense of humor will get you through awkward advances and other potentially ugly situations.

LEO (July 23 – August 22): You need to clear the air and explore new ideas. Just be careful when and where! This is what friends are for, not your boss. Actually, once you have those ideas honed and polished your boss will probably love them!

VIRGO (August 23 – September 22): Whatever you’re worried about, face the problem directly. Discussing it with your partner could solve it. (Not discussing it together could in fact be the problem!) If words fail you, try round one in the bedroom.

LIBRA (September 23 – October 22): It’s your moment to shine. Worrying about family and relations could hold back your career, but understanding them as important support and resources will strengthen you. It’s all in your attitude and knowing how empowering your roots really are.

SCORPIO (October 23 – November 21): There is a special pleasure in getting to the truth of the matter, but doing so could be very disruptive to personal and work relationships. Conspire “with,” not “against,” your potential allies in your search for understanding.

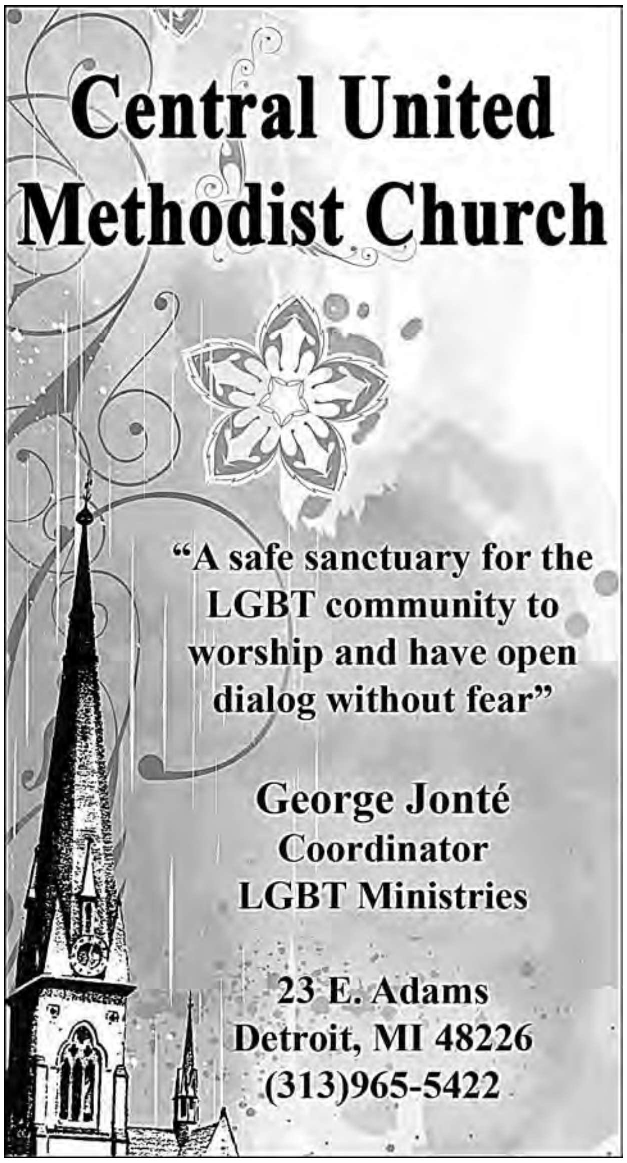
SAGITTARIUS (November 22 – December 20): Allow yourself to be challenged by new ideas without arguing about them. Just consider them and see how they might be constructively applied. You love your theories, but practical experience is what proves truth and value.

CAPRICORN (December 21 – January 19): Asserting yourself can create disaster at home. Pay attention and be ready to adapt. It may take some sacrifice, probably of some aspect of your ego, but foresight and your willingness to transform will save you.

AQUARIUS (January 20 – February 18): Pay close attention to what your partner has to tell you. Don’t argue! You don’t have to agree; you do have to think about it. Affirming roots and community will give you the strength you need to make necessary changes.

PISCES (February 19 – March 19): Changes at work are likely to be a blessing in disguise. Friends’ advice that you don’t like will prove most helpful. It may need more discussion for you to fully understand. Keep an open mind.

Jack Fertig, a professional astrologer since 1977, is available for personal and business consultations in person in San Francisco, or online everywhere. He can be reached at 415-864-8302, through his website at www.starjack.com, and by email at QScopes@qsyndicate.com.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Solution to puzzle from page 22

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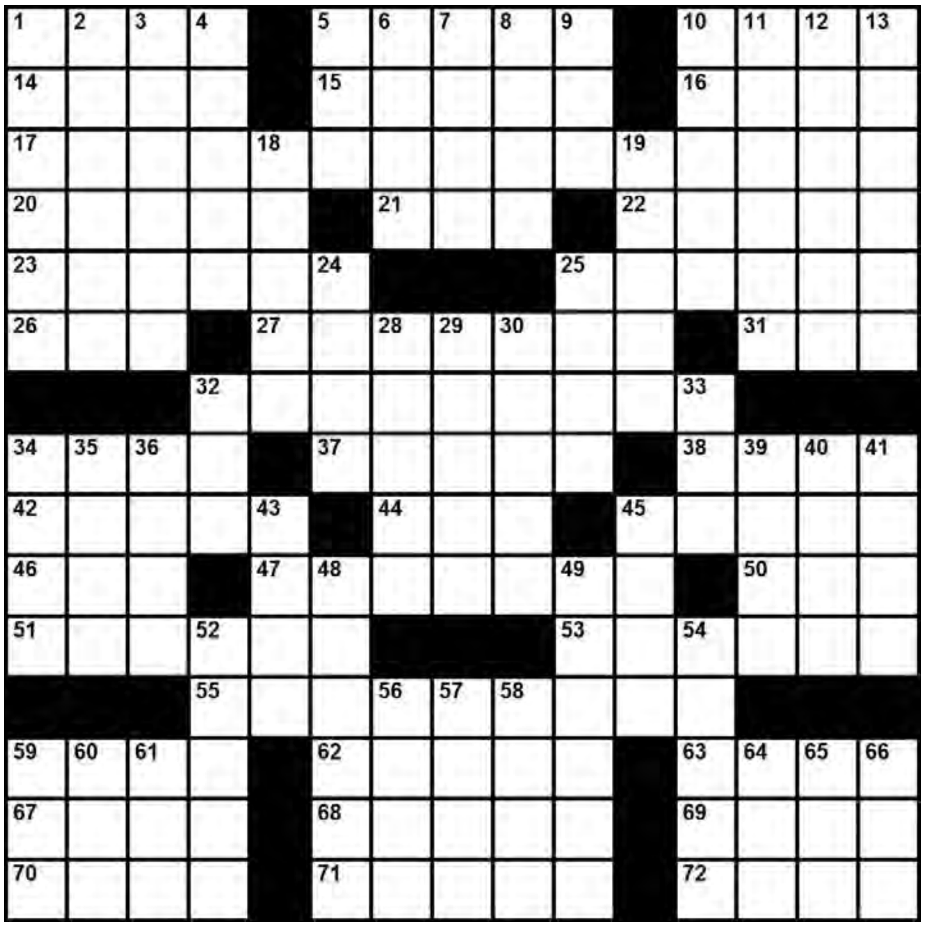

Prisoner of Love

Across

1 Give the once-over in a bar
5 K on Lesbos
10 Bitch
14 Like a broken horse
15 Fashion designer Perry
16 Spread it on your muffin
17 With 23-Across, movie about a prisoner of love
20 Stuck (on)
21 Marilyn Monroe's two big ones
22 "We're doomed!"
23 See 17-Across
25 Jim, who acted in the movie
26 Sympathetic sounds
27 Calculate the bottom line
31 Byron's before
32 Gender-bending actress Cushman
34 ___ mater
37 Cocteau contemporary Maurice
38 Scarlett's plantation
42 Start of a quote from the movie
44 Film noir classic
45 More of the quote
46 Roof animal of Tennessee
47 White House closet woman
50 Lodge man
51 TV's "Queen of the Jungle"
53 Ruler at Karnak
55 End of the quote
59 Way out there
62 Tickle pink
63 Male actor named Julia
67 Collette of "The Hours"
68 Language that may be vulgar
69 Lounge (around)
70 Art Deco name
71 Stallion's sound
72 Langston Hughes was born here

Down

1 Scarlet letter, e.g.
2 Simon of _Amadeus_
3 Illicit love affairs
4 "Over my dead body!"
5 F, in the orchestra pit
6 Homeopathic plant
7 Pudding fruit
8 Spots on cards
9 What hangs from a Cuban
10 Pink, for one
11 "It"
12 Paul of "Mad About You"
13 Seaman running down the deck
18 Head of costume designing
19 Ill-chosen
24 In order (to)
25 Circumcises
28 It may be rough
29 Foil maker
30 Tabloid mainstay Lindsay
32 When repeated, a 1953 Cole Porter musical
33 JFK posting
34 Nuts and bolts
35 Remini of "The King of Queens"
36 Wee bit
39 One side of a vote
40 Get excited
41 Seeks answers
43 Baby boomers' kids
45 I. Newton discovered it
48 Places for mikes
49 Set straight
52 Bone-chilling
54 Tennessee Williams' lover Frank
56 Flamboyant style
57 Cold war defense assn.
58 Direction from Stephen Pyles
59 Devoured Beard's sweetmeats
60 Tit-tat connection
61 Queen of the hill
64 Mouth-open-wide sound
65 What an Israeli shoots off
66 Feline sign

Solution on 21

Pet of the Week

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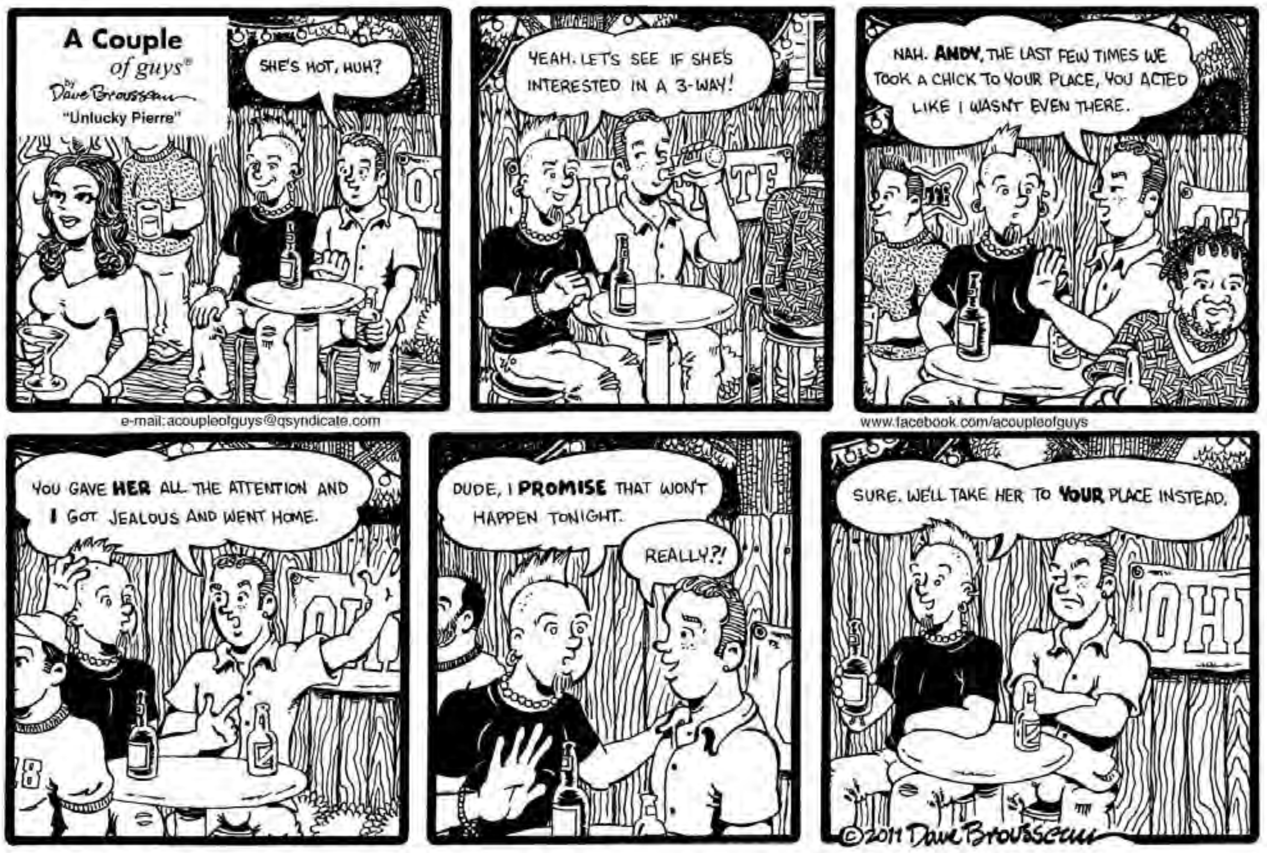
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by Dave Brousseau
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YEAH. LET'S SEE IF SHE'S INTERESTED IN A 3-WAY!
NAH. ANDY, THE LAST FEW TIMES WE TOOK A CHICK TO YOUR PLACE, YOU ACTED LIKE I WASN'T EVEN THERE.
YOU GAVE HER ALL THE ATTENTION AND I GOT JEALOUS AND WENT HOME.
DUDE, I PROMISE THAT WON'T HAPPEN TONIGHT.
REALLY?!
SURE. WE'LL TAKE HER TO YOUR PLACE INSTEAD.
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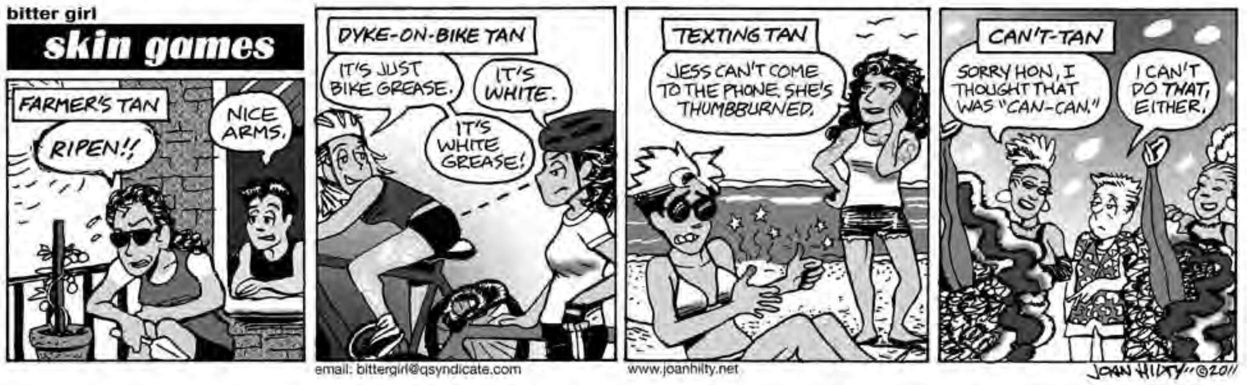
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IT'S WHITE GREASE!
TEXTING TAN
JESS CAN'T COME TO THE PHONE. SHE'S THUMBBURNED.
CAN'T-TAN
SORRY HON, I THOUGHT THAT WAS "CAN-CAN."
I CAN'T DO THAT, EITHER.
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101-ANNOUNCEMNTS LGBT AA MEETINGS

Ann Arbor-Friday

7:30 pm, St. Andrews Episcopal Church Gay AA, 306 N. Division St. Closed/Discussion.

Bloomfield Hills-Thursday

7:00 pm ,Sobriety in The Hills Gay AA, Kirk in The Hills Church, 1340 W. Long Lake Rd. Closed/Discussion.

Detroit-Tuesday / Friday

8:00 pm, Downtown Gay AA, Fort Street Presbyterian Church, 631 West Fort St. Closed/Discussion (Open 1st Friday of every month).

Farmington Hills-Monday

8:00 pm, Suburban West Gay AA, Universalist Unitarian Church, 25301 Halstead (Between 10 & 11 Mile Roads) Closed / Discussion.

Ferndale-Monday / Wednesday / Friday

11:30 a.m., Brown Baggers Gay AA, Affirmations, 290 West 9 Mile Rd. Closed/Discussion.

Ferndale-Wednesday

8 p.m., Diversity Wednesday Gay AA, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 540 W. Lewiston @ Livernois. Closed/ Discussion.

Ferndale-Saturday

1 p.m. Brown Baggers Gay AA, Affirmations, 290 West 9 Mile Rd. Closed/Discussion.

8 p.m. Go After Your Sobriety Gay AA, Drayton Ave Presbyterian Church, 2441 Pinecrest. Closed/ Discussion.

Livonia-Friday

8 p.m., West Side Story's Gay AA, Providence Medical Center, 7 Mile & Newburgh. Closed/Discussion.

Pontiac-Tuesday / Thursday / Sunday

8 p.m., Pontiac Gay AA, Shrine of St. Joseph, 400 West South Blvd. Closed/Discussion.

Warren-Monday

7:30 p.m., Eastside Serenity Gay AA, Faith-Trinity United Church of Christ, 12221 Martin Rd. East of Hoover. Closed/Discussion.

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Dear Jody

BY JODY VALLEY

Lost love to friend

Q: First, let me tell you that I'm a single woman, looking to find my soul mate, or at least a girlfriend. Therefore, I go out a lot, trying to put myself out there to see if I can find that special person.

A week ago I went to a party with a female friend, "Mary" – just a friend. When we first got to the party, I saw this woman, "Laura," who's very hot, standing with a group of people that I didn't know very well. Nevertheless, I stopped, talked to them a little, flirted with Laura; but then, because I knew these other people at the party, I went and hung out with them for awhile. But all the time, I kept looking over at Laura – flirting – while I was talking with my friends.

My friend, Mary, knew that I was interested in Laura. She was right there when I was flirting with her. And, I know that Laura was interested in me, because she was responding to my flirting.

I was about to get my courage up and go over to Laura when I got a phone call from a friend telling me about her mother. Her mom had been taken to the hospital ER and was in bad shape. I, of course, wasn't about to tell her that I was about to make my big move toward Laura. So, I talked to my friend until she was feeling better.

By the time I got off the phone, Laura was taken. By Mary!

I couldn't believe it! Mary and Laura were huddled together in a corner, holding hands and kissing. Like I said, Mary was very well aware of the fact that I was interested in Laura. If it weren't for that phone call, it would have been me in the corner holding hands and kissing Laura. But because I was a good supportive friend, I lost Laura. And, I have to say, I may have lost Mary too because I feel so betrayed by her. I don't want anything to do with her anymore or, at least, I don't think I do. I ended up going home alone, while Mary and Laura left the party together.

The next day, Mary called me. She told me about Laura and how the night went. She's in love! She acted all surprised that I was mad at her for taking Laura from me. She said that she didn't know that I was into Laura. Mary said that she had been flirting with Laura too. She sounded sincere, but it's hard for me to believe. Now, I'm really confused.

Do you think that Mary is sincere when she says that she didn't know that I was interested in Laura? Do you think she really didn't know? I hate to lose Mary as a friend, but I also don't want to be a fool, or have something like this happen to me again.

Loser in Love

A: I can't know if Mary really knew about your interest in Laura, anymore than you seem to be able to know for sure. From what you've said, you never even verbalized it to her; you just assumed she knew that. Regarding her sincerity, I would be judging that on her past behavior: Has she been a dishonest or deceptive person with you in the past? Or with others? Why wouldn't you believe her?

And, just because you were flirting with Laura doesn't mean she wasn't too. Unless you and Mary had been stuck together at the party, like conjoined twins, how would either of you know what the other was doing at every minute?

Ultimately, you will have to make a decision to believe, or not believe Mary. But do you want to lose a friend when there is doubt in your mind about her intentions?

P.S. At the time you were flirting with Laura, assuming she wasn't with anyone else, no one had flirting dibs on her. Anyone in the party was free to flirt with her, and she was free to respond to anyone she pleased; so, in my book, there really was no betrayal. The only betrayal would have been if you told Mary that you were interested in Laura and were trying to connect with her, and then she went after Mary anyway.

Jody Valley is now on Facebook: Search: Dear Jody Valley.

Jody Valley spent 12 years as a clinical social worker. She worked with the LGBT community both as a counselor and a workshop leader in the areas of coming out, self-esteem and relationship issues. Reach Jody at DearJodyValley@hotmail.com. The "Dear Jody" column appears weekly.

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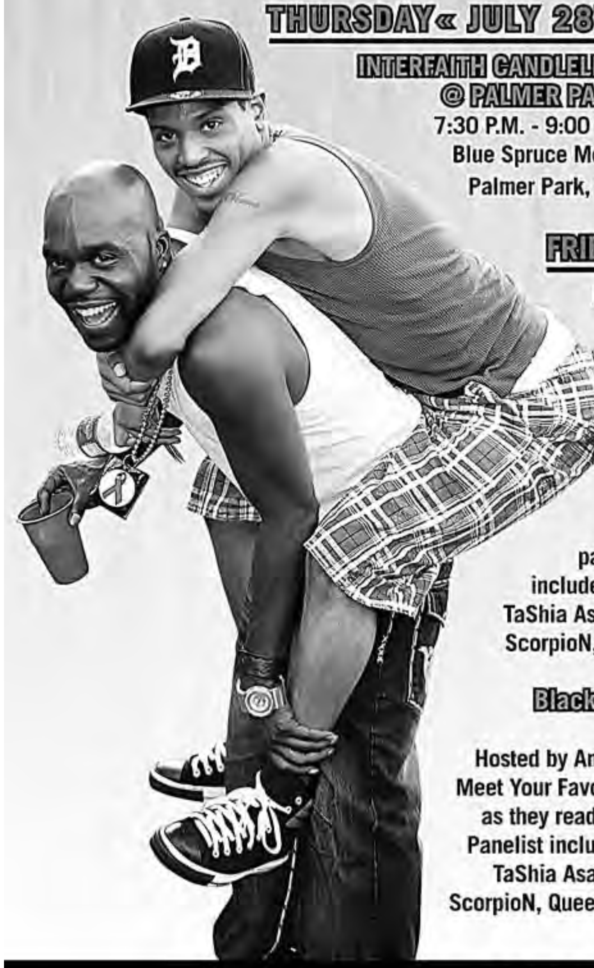

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GENESIS CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS XVI:

4 PM until 10 P.M.
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